The ספר הזהר

ZOHAR

PRITZKER EDITION

IV

Exodus

Translation and Commentary by

DANIEL C. MATT

ספר הזהר

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ZOHAR

Pritzker Edition

VOLUME FOUR

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Daniel C. Matt

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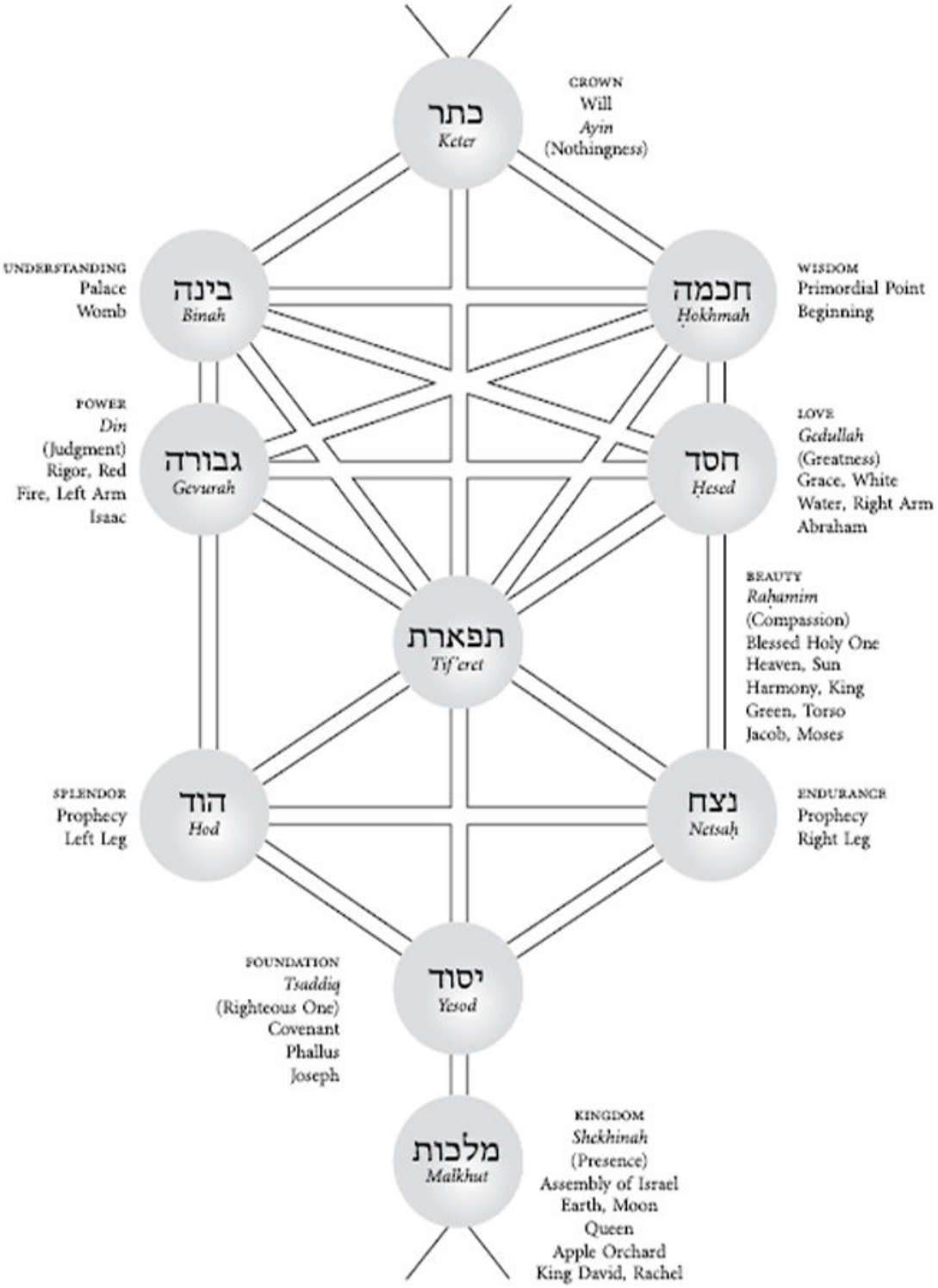

The Ten Sefirot

Preface

This fourth volume of *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition* covers the first half of Exodus, including Pharaoh's enslavement of the Israelites, the birth of Moses, the deliverance from Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea, and the Revelation at Mount Sinai. In exploring the mystical dimension of these dramatic events, the *Zohar* treats the nature of evil and its relation to the divine realm, the romance of Moses and *Shekhinah*, and the inner meaning of the Ten Commandments. In the context of the miraculous splitting of the Red Sea, Rabbi Shim'on reveals the mysterious Name of 72, a complex divine name consisting of 216 letters (72 triads), formed out of three verses in Exodus 14.[1]

I am grateful to Margot Pritzker for her enduring devotion to this immense project, and to Rabbi Yehiel Poupko for his sage guidance.

Merav Carmeli continues to comb Aramaic manuscripts of the *Zohar*, preparing lists of variants. This precious material enables me to establish a critical Aramaic text, upon which this translation is based.

The critical Aramaic text corresponding to the first four volumes of *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition* is available on the website of Stanford University Press: www.sup.org/zohar. My brother, Rabbi Jonathan Matt, has kindly and meticulously edited a user-friendly version of this text.[2]

Professor Ronit Meroz of Tel Aviv University, whose work has dramatically advanced the study of the manuscripts of the *Zohar*, has generously shared with me the data that she has collected relating to hundreds of

these manuscripts, along with her analysis. Her research has provided me with a panoramic perspective of the manuscripts, helping me determine their reliability. She has also provided me with her synoptic edition of *Parashat Shemot* (corresponding to Chapter 1), a copy of numerous *Zohar* manuscripts, and her list of manuscripts for each *parashah*. For all this, I thank her deeply.

Sari Segal, working in Jerusalem, has helped to track down various bibliographical treasures.

My wife, Ḥana, continues to inspire and enlighten me day by day. I thank her for her radiance.

Finally, to the One beyond all names: Blessed are You, who graciously grants knowledge.

D.C.M.

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1. See below, pp. 258–64 and n. 216.

2. For a description of the various online versions of the critical text, see the website. For my methodology in constructing this text, see the website and Volume 1, Translator's Introduction, xv–xviii.

THE ZOHAR

פרשת שמות

Parashat Shemot

"NAMES" (EXODUS 1:1–6:1)

These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each man with his household they came (Exodus 1:1).

The enlightened will shine like זהר הרקיע (*zohar ha-raqi'a*), *the radiance of the sky, and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever* (Daniel 12:3).

The enlightened—those who contemplate the mystery of wisdom.[1]

Will shine—shining and sparkling with luster of supernal Wisdom.[2]

Like the זהר (*zohar*), *radiance*—נהירו (*nehiru*), shining, and sparkling of נהרא (*nahara*), the river, issuing from Eden.[3] This is the concealed mystery called הרקיע (*ha-raqi'a*), the expanse—in which exist stars, constellations, sun and moon, and all those lamps of light.[4]

Zohar, Radiance, of this expanse brilliantly illumines the garden, and the Tree of Life stands in the middle of the garden, its branches covering all those forms, trees, and spices in worthy garments. Beneath it all beasts of the field find shade, and all birds of the sky dwell beneath those branches.[5]

Zohar, Radiance! Fruit of the tree provides life to all, existing forever and ever. The Other Side does not abide there—only the side of holiness.[6] Happy is the share of those who taste it, existing forever and ever! These are called "living" in this world and "living" in the world that is coming.

Zohar, Radiance! This tree rises above, above—five hundred parasangs its distance, six hundred thousand in its expanse.[7] In this tree exists one radiancy: *zohar, radiance*, all colors inhering there. Those colors ascend and descend, not settling anywhere except in that tree. When they issue from it to appear in the radiance that does not shine, they settle and do not, endure and do not—for they settle nowhere else.[8]

From this tree issued twelve tribes, bounded there; and they descended, with this radiance that does not shine, into the exile of Egypt along with numerous supernal camps, as is written: *These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt*.[9]

Rabbi Shim'on opened, "היה היה (*Hayoh hayah*), *Happening it happened, that the word of YHVH came to Ezekiel son of Buzi*… (Ezekiel 1:3). *Hayoh hayah, Happening it happened*—why twice?[10] [2b]

"Further, it should be asked: If Ezekiel was a faithful prophet, why did he reveal everything that he saw? Should one whom the king has brought into his palace reveal the secrets he has seen?

"Well, surely Ezekiel was a faithful prophet, and all that he saw was by faith; with the permission of the blessed Holy One he revealed all that he revealed. All was as it should have been."[11]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "One who is accustomed to suffering—even in the jaws of suffering, he bears his burden without anxiety. But one who is unaccustomed to suffering and has spent all his days spoiled with delights—

when he encounters suffering, it is absolute, demanding tears.

"When Israel descended to Egypt, they were used to suffering, since all the days of that virtuous one—their father—were steeped in suffering; therefore, they endured exile fittingly.[12] But the exile of Babylon—that was absolute suffering; that was suffering over which those above and below wept. Those above, as is written: *Behold, the Erelim cried outside; angels of peace weep bitterly* (Isaiah 33:7).[13] Those below, as is written: *By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept* (Psalms 137:1). All wept over the exile of Babylon. Why? Because they had been pampered with royal luxuries, as is written: *The precious children of Zion, worth their weight in pure gold…* (Lamentations 4:2). And now they were descending into exile with millstones on their necks, their hands bound tightly behind. Once they were in exile, they thought that they would never be revived, that the blessed Holy One had abandoned them forever.[14]

"We have learned: At that moment, the blessed Holy One summoned His entire household and said to them, 'What are you doing here? My children are exiled in Babylon, and you remain here? Arise! All of you descend to Babylon, and I along with you!' As is written: *Thus says YHVH: 'For your sake I was sent to Babylon; I will bring down all bars'* (Isaiah 43:14). *For your sake I was sent to Babylon*—the blessed Holy One. *I will bring down all bars*—all the chariots and supernal camps.[15]

"At that moment, the blessed Holy One revealed Himself to Ezekiel, and he saw all that he saw, and proclaimed to Israel, 'Behold! Your Lord is here!' They did not believe him, until he was compelled to reveal all that he revealed: *And I saw… And I saw*. If he had revealed even more, all would have been necessary.[16] As soon as Israel saw this, they rejoiced; and when they heard the words from Ezekiel's mouth, they felt no anxiety at all about their exile, for they

knew that the blessed Holy One had not forsaken them. Whatever he revealed, he revealed with permission.

"We have learned: Wherever Israel went in exile, *Shekhinah* was exiled with them. Here, concerning the exile in Egypt, what is written? *These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob* (Exodus 1:1). Since it is written *the sons of Israel*, why *with Jacob*? It should have said *who came with him*. However, *These are the names of the sons of Israel*—those chariots and supernal camps that descended *with Jacob*, together with *Shekhinah*, into the exile of Egypt."[17]

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, "*With me from Lebanon, bride; with me from Lebanon come! Descend from the peak of Amana, from the peak of Senir and Hermon, from the dens of lions, from the mountains of leopards* (Song of Songs 4:8). This verse was uttered concerning Assembly of Israel.[18] When Israel went forth from Egypt and approached Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, the blessed Holy One said to Her, *With me from Lebanon*—from that supernal delight You have come.[19]

"כלה (*Kallah*), *Bride*—consummate, like the moon consummated by the sun with all radiance and sparkle.[20] [3a]

"*With me from Lebanon come!*—so that Your children will receive the Torah.

"*Descend from the peak of Amana*. תשורי (*Tashuri*), *Descend*—as is said: *and there is no* תשורה (*teshurah*), *gift, to bring* (1 Samuel 9:7). Receive a gift for Your children.[21]

"מראש אמנה (*Me-rosh amanah*), *From the peak of Amana*—מראשיתא (*mereshita*), from the beginning, of their entry into supernal מהימנותא (*meheimanuta*), faith, when they said *All that YHVH has spoken we will do and we will heed* (Exodus 24:7). They became equivalent to supernal angels, of whom is written *Bless YHVH, O His angels, mighty in strength, who*

fulfill His word, heeding the voice of His word (Psalms 103:20). Then Assembly of Israel received a gift.[22]

"*From the peak of Senir and Hermon*—Mount Sinai, which they approached and beneath which they stationed themselves, as is written: *They stationed themselves at the bottom of the mountain* (Exodus 19:17).[23]

"*From the dens of lions*—the children of Seir, to whom the blessed Holy One offered the Torah, but they refused to accept it.

"*From the mountains of leopards*—the children of Ishmael, for it is written: *YHVH from Sinai appeared and from Seir He shone upon them, He radiated from Mount Paran and He came from myriads of holy ones* (Deuteronomy 33:2).[24]

"What is the meaning of *He came from myriads of holy ones*? As we have learned: When the blessed Holy One was about to give the Torah to Israel, camps of supernal angels came. They opened and said, *YHVH our Lord, how majestic is Your name throughout the earth! You have set Your splendor above the heavens* (Psalms 8:2). They wanted the Torah to be given to them.

"The blessed Holy One said to them, 'Is there death among you? For it is written: *When a person dies in a tent* (Numbers 19:14); *When a man has committed a sin punishable by death* (Deuteronomy 21:22). Is there sin among you? Do you need laws? Is there robbery or theft among you? For it is written: *You shall not steal* (Exodus 20:13). Are there women among you? For it is written: *You shall not commit adultery* (ibid.). Is there falsehood among you? For it is written: *You shall not bear false witness against your fellow* (ibid.). Is there coveting among you? For it is written: *You shall not covet* (ibid., 14). Why are you asking for the Torah?'

"Immediately they opened and said, *YHVH our Lord, how majestic is Your name throughout the earth!* (Psalms 8:10)—whereas it is not written *You have set Your splendor*

above the heavens. Therefore, *He came from myriads of holy ones*; and then, *from His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2).”[25]

Rabbi Yose established this verse as referring to when *Shekhinah* descended into exile in Egypt.[26]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “This verse was uttered concerning the mystery of the union of faith. *With me from Lebanon, bride*. Voice said to speech, *With me*, for this voice comes to speech, conducting it—becoming one, completely inseparable. Because voice is general and speech is particular; so the general requires the particular, and the particular requires the general. For there is no voice without speech, and no speech without voice. So, *with me from Lebanon*—since the essence of both of them derives *from Lebanon*.[27]

“*Descend from the peak of Amana*—the larynx, from which issues breath, consummating all, from the mystery of Lebanon, concealed and treasured away.[28]

“*From the peak of Senir and Hermon*—the tongue, tip and middle, articulating speech.

“*From the dens of lions*—the teeth.

“*From the mountains of leopards*—the lips, consummation, by which speech is consummated.”[29]

These are the names of the sons of Israel (Exodus 1:1). Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, “*Do not eat the bread of one with an evil eye, do not desire his delicacies* (Proverbs 23:6). *Do not eat the bread of one with an evil eye*—because the bread or benefit offered by that evil-eyed person is not worth eating or enjoying. For if Israel, when they descended into Egypt, had not tasted the bread of the Egyptians, they would not have been abandoned in exile and the Egyptians would not have oppressed them.”[30]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said to him, “But a decree was issued!”[31]

He replied, “All is fitting, for it is not written *that your seed will be strangers in the land of Egypt*, but rather *in a*

land not theirs (Genesis 15:13)—even in a different land."[32]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "One who has a large appetite—who eats more than other people—or one who follows his intestines: if he encounters such an evil-eyed person, he should slaughter himself rather than eat from that one's bread.[33] For no bread in the world is worse than that of the evil-eyed. What is written? *For the Egyptians would not eat bread with the Hebrews—because that is abhorrent to Egypt* (Genesis 43:32). Such is the bread of the evil-eyed!"[34]

There are three who thrust *Shekhinah* away from the world, preventing the blessed Holy One from dwelling in the world. Human beings cry out and their voice is not heard.[35]

These are: One [3b] who lies with a menstruant—for no defilement in the world is as potent as that of menstruation. The defilement of menstruation is more severe than any defilement in the world. He is defiled and all who approach him are defiled along with him. Wherever they go, *Shekhinah* is repelled by them.[36]

Furthermore, he inflicts severe illness upon himself and upon the child that he engenders. For as soon as a man comes near a menstruant, that impurity leaps upon him and is absorbed in all his limbs. The child he engenders at that moment draws a spirit of impurity, and all his days he will dwell in impurity, for his formation and foundation are based on an impurity greater and stronger than any in the world. For the instant that a man comes near a menstruant, that impurity leaps upon him, as is written: *Her menstrual impurity will be upon him* (Leviticus 15:24).[37]

One who lies with a Gentile woman, inserting the covenant—sign of the covenant of holiness—into another domain, as is written: *He has married the daughter of an alien god* (Malachi 2:11).[38] We have learned: The blessed Holy One has no jealousy except for the holy covenant—vitality of the Holy Name and mystery of faith.[39] What is

written? *The people began to go whoring with the daughters of Moab*. Immediately, *the wrath of YHVH flared against Israel* (Numbers 25:1, 3). The leaders of the people, who knew and did not stop them, were punished first, as is written: *Take all the leaders of the people and impale them to YHVH, facing the sun* (ibid., 4).[40]

Rabbi Abba said, "What is meant by *facing the sun*? Facing the covenant, called *sun*. Concerning this is said: *For YHVH of Hosts is sun and shield* (Psalms 84:12)—*sun and shield* is holy covenant. Just as the *sun* shines and illumines the world, so holy covenant shines and illumines the human body.[41]

"*Shield*—just as a shield is intended to protect a person, so holy covenant protects him. And whoever preserves it cannot be assailed by any harm in the world. This is *facing the sun*.

"In every single generation, leaders of the people will be seized for this sin—if they are aware of it—because concerning such guilt they must be jealous on behalf of the blessed Holy One for this covenant.[42] Whoever inserts this holiness into another domain, of him is written *You shall have no other gods beside Me. You shall not bow to them and you shall not worship them, for I, YHVH your God, am a jealous God* (Exodus 20:3, 5)—all is a single jealousy. Therefore, *Shekhinah* is repelled by him. Whoever betrays the holy covenant sealed in a man's flesh betrays, as it were, faith in the blessed Holy One. Whoever betrays the seal of the King betrays the King Himself. He has no share in the God of Israel, except through the power of extreme repentance."[43]

Rabbi Yose opened, "*The Children of Israel abandoned YHVH, so He delivered them* [*into the hand of their enemies*].[44] What does *they abandoned* mean? They rejected the sealed covenant of holiness—circumcising but not uncovering—until Deborah appeared and inspired all of Israel to offer themselves for this, as is written: בפרוע פרעות

(*Biphro'a pera'ot*), *When uncoverings are uncovered, in Israel, when the people willingly offer themselves, bless YHVH!* (Judges 5:2)."[45]

One who kills his children—the fetus carried by his wife, causing it to be killed in her belly, destroying the formation of the blessed Holy One and His handiwork. There are those who kill a person, but this one kills his own children![46] Three evils he perpetrates, which the whole world cannot bear; so the world disintegrates little by little, with no one realizing. The blessed Holy One withdraws from the world, and sword, famine, and pestilence come upon the world. Those [three evils] are: killing his children, demolishing the structure of the King, and driving away the soul—which goes wandering through the world, unable to find rest.[47] For these the Holy Spirit weeps, and all those punishments are inflicted upon the world. Woe to that man! Woe to him! Better for him if he had never been created!

Happy are Israel! For even though they were exiled in Egypt, they guarded themselves against all these three: a menstruant, a Gentile woman—and they persevered in procreation. For even though it had been decreed *Every son that is born you shall throw into the Nile* (Exodus 1:22), not a single one of them killed a fetus in a woman's belly—all the more so, afterward. By virtue of this, they came out of exile.[48]

A menstruant—for Rabbi Ḥiyya taught: What is the meaning [4a] of the verse *He made the basin of bronze and its stand of bronze from the mirrors of the women who served* [*at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting*] (Exodus 38:8). Why did the women deserve this? Because they guarded themselves in the Egyptian exile, and after they had been purified they would come adorned and gaze into a mirror with their husbands, arousing them to be fruitful and multiply.[49]

A Gentile woman—as is written: *All the hosts of YHVH went out from the land of Egypt* (Exodus 12:41); *tribes of*

Yah, *a testimony to Israel* (Psalms 122:4); *These are the names of the sons of Israel* (Exodus 1:1); *tribes of the Children of Israel* (Numbers 36:3); *Speak to the Children of Israel* (Exodus 14:2)—*Children of Israel*, precisely![50]

Now, you might say: "Look, it is written *He was the son of an Egyptian man* (Leviticus 24:10)!" Well, certainly there was one, and Scripture exposes him, as is written: *He was the son of an Egyptian man… his mother's name was Shelomith daughter of Dibri of the tribe of Dan* (ibid., 10–11).[51]

Being fruitful and multiplying—as is written: *The Children of Israel were fruitful and swarmed and multiplied…* (Exodus 1:7).[52] The Israelites were careful about all of these. As *children of Israel* they entered; as *children of Israel* they emerged, as is written: *These are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt…* (Exodus 1:1).[53]

These are the names of the sons of Israel (Exodus 1:1).

Rabbi El'azar and Rabbi Yose were walking on the way. As they were walking, Rabbi El'azar said, "Open your mouth and let your words shine!"[54]

He replied, "Would it please my Master if I ask about a certain matter that I find difficult? I have heard from the Holy Lamp,[55] who once said: '*These are the names of the sons of Israel*—Israel the Elder—all those forces and camps descending with Jacob, as is written: את יעקב (*et Ya'aqov*), *with Jacob* (ibid.).' But what is *each man with his house* (ibid.)?"[56]

He replied, "Certainly so! However, we have learned: Whoever receives from another is a 'house' to the one who gives. So, *each man with his house they came*."[57]

Rabbi El'azar opened, saying, "*When Solomon had finished building the house of YHVH and the house of the*

king… (1 Kings 9:1). Now, since it is said *the house of* YHVH, what is *the house of the king*? If you think that this refers to Solomon, not so! Rather, *the house of* YHVH—the Temple; *the house of the king*—the Holy of Holies, innermost of all.[58]

"*The king*—anonymous. This *king*, although He is Supreme King, is female in relation to the supernal point, concealed of all. But even though He is female, He is male in relation to the king below. Consequently, all follows this pattern; so of those below is written mysteriously *each man with his house they came*."[59]

[5b][60] *A new king arose over Egypt* [*who did not know Joseph*] (Exodus 1:8).

Rabbi Abba opened, "*Happy are you who sow by all waters, who let loose the feet of the ox and the donkey* (Isaiah 32:20). Happy are Israel, whom the blessed Holy One desired from among all other nations and brought near to Him, as is written: *You* YHVH *has chosen to be a treasured people to Him of all the peoples* (Deuteronomy 14:2),[61] and similarly: *For* YHVH*'s share is His people, Jacob His allotted inheritance* (ibid. 32:9). Israel cleave to the blessed Holy One, as is written: *You, cleaving to* YHVH *your God, are alive every one of you* [6a] *today!* (ibid. 4:4).

"Therefore they are worthy before Him, because they sow על (*al*), *above, all waters*. What does this mean: *above all waters*? That they sow righteousness.[62] And of one who sows righteousness is written *For Your love is high unto heaven* (Psalms 57:11). *Above all waters*—as is written: *For* [*Your love is*] *higher than heaven* (ibid. 108:5). *Higher than heaven*—this is *above all waters*. Who is *higher than heaven*? The world that is coming. And Israel sow seed *above all waters*.[63]

"In the Book of Rav Yeiva Sava,[64] it says as follows: It is written *This sentence by decree of the watchers, this verdict by order of the holy ones* (Daniel 4:14). All

judgments of this world, all decrees, and all requests exist in a single palace, where seventy-two of the Sanhedrin examine the cases of the world. That palace is called Palace of Merit, because when judgment is deliberated, a person's merits are pondered first.[65] Not so on the rung of that Other Side, where there is a place called Guilt, for all actions of that site of the Serpent—*woman of whoredom*—are intended solely to dig up a person's guilt and to slander a servant to his master.[66]

"Those in the Palace of Merit are called 'sweet waters,' 'clear waters.' Those in the Palace of Guilt are called 'bitter waters,' *bitter curse-conveying waters* (Numbers 5:18). In that Palace of Merit three are not found—children, life, and sustenance—nor in that place of guilt; neither in sweet, clear waters, nor in bitter, cursing waters.

"Therefore, Israel sow *above all waters*—the holy seed they engender is *above all waters*, for their seed is established solely above. The matter depends on holy מזלא (*mazzala*), flux of destiny; it is *above all waters*.[67]

"*Who drive away the feet of the ox and the donkey* (Isaiah 32:20)—for they possess nothing of that evil side, expelling all evil portions and cleaving to the good side of all supernal holiness. When *ox* and *donkey* couple as one, they become two evil demons. *Ox* is side of harsh Judgment, clinging to the side of holiness. When *donkey*—from the Other Side—couples with him, they become two evil demons of the world. So, Simeon contained the potency of harsh Judgment, and when they couple as one, the world cannot endure. Therefore, *Do not plow with an ox and a donkey together* (Deuteronomy 22:10). So, Jacob sent this message to Esau, as is written: *I have acquired ox and donkey* (Genesis 32:6). And if Jacob had not humbled himself, an immense fear would have overtaken Esau.[68]

"Come and see: All nations of the world and all kings of the world are empowered only on account of Israel. Egypt did not rule over the whole world until Israel came,

entering exile; then they overwhelmed all nations of the world. Babylon overpowered all nations of the world only so that Israel would be exiled among them. Edom overpowered all nations of the world only on account of Israel—so that they would be exiled among them. For these nations had been subdued by other nations and were lower than all of them, but on account of Israel they became powerful.[69]

"Egypt, as is written: *out of a house of slaves* (Exodus 20:2)—they are called *slaves*, literally, because the Egyptians were subservient among other nations.[70] Babylon, as is written: *Behold the land of the Chaldeans! This people no longer exists* (Isaiah 23:13). Edom, as is written: *Behold, I make you least among the nations; you are utterly despised* (Obadiah 1:2).

"All of them obtained power only on account of Israel; for when the people of Israel were in exile among them, they immediately overwhelmed all nations of the world. Why? Because Israel alone corresponds to all nations of the world. When Israel entered exile, Egypt was immediately elevated, empowered over all other nations, as is written: *A new king arose over Egypt. Arose*—they were raised, for that princely authority of Egypt was empowered and rose, granted dominion over all other nations. For first, dominion is given to that prince above, and then to the nation [6b] below. Therefore, *A new king arose over Egypt*—their prince. *New*—for until that day he had no dominion over all other nations, and now he was raised to rule over all nations of the world. Then was fulfilled: *At three things the earth trembles… a slave becoming a king…* (Proverbs 30:21–22)."[71]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "Thirty days before a nation rises to power or is overtaken by calamity on earth, that event is proclaimed in the world. Sometimes it is transmitted through the mouths of children, sometimes through people who have no sense, and sometimes that word is transmitted

through the mouths of birds, who announce it in the world, yet no one notices.[72] When the nation is virtuous, that word is transmitted to righteous leaders of the people, so that it will be revealed to them and they can return to their Lord. When they are not virtuous, then as we have said."

Rabbi El'azar was sitting at the gateway of the gate of Lydda, along with Rabbi Abba, Rabbi Yehudah, and Rabbi Yose.[73] Rabbi Yose said, "I will tell you what I saw this morning. Arising with the light, I saw a bird flying—rising three times, descending once. It called out: 'Lofty, lofty ones, soaring to the right through the skies! Three upright princes, ruling over earth. One sitting who is not sitting—passed through blazing fire, his vitality eliminated, his dominion disappearing. Three pillars, supernal rulers, poised over the world.'[74]

"I projected at that bird, exclaiming, 'Bird, bird! Tell me: that one whose vitality is eliminated and those rulers poised over the world, who are they?'[75]

"From its right wing, it cast these three arrows toward me; from its left wing, one. And I don't know what is being hinted!"

Rabbi El'azar took them and inserted them into his nostrils; blood issued from his nostrils. He said, "Surely, three ruling nations stand poised over the world; they are on the side of the Romans and are destined to impose evil decrees upon Israel."

He took that arrow of the left wing, smelled it, and black fire issued from it. He said, "The dominion of Egypt has been eliminated, and one Roman king is destined to pass through the whole land and appoint shield-bearing princes in Egypt, destroying buildings and erecting buildings."

Rabbi El'azar threw them to the ground; those three fell on the one from the left.[76]

While they were sitting, a child passed by, reciting: *An utterance concerning Egypt: See, YHVH rides on a swift cloud and He is coming to Egypt. The godlings of Egypt will tremble before Him, and the heart of Egypt melt within it* (Isaiah 19:1). A second one, his friend, passed by and exclaimed: 'The land of Egypt will be a desolation.' A third, his friend, passed by and exclaimed: 'The wisdom of Egypt will perish.' They saw the arrow of the left wing burning, while the other three on top of it were not.[77]

Rabbi El'azar said, "That of the bird, of the children, is all supernal prophecy. The blessed Holy One wanted to show us secrets that He is enacting, as is written: *Surely YHVH Elohim does nothing without revealing His secret to His servants the prophets* (Amos 3:7)—and the wise are always preferable to prophets, because Holy Spirit sometimes spreads over prophets and sometimes does not, whereas it never departs from the wise for even a moment. Further, they know what is above and below, though it must not be revealed."[78]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "All is in wisdom, and the wisdom of Rabbi El'azar surpasses them all."

Rabbi Abba said, "If not for the wise, human beings would not know what Torah is, nor the commandments of the Master of the World; the spirit of human beings would not differ from the spirit of animals."[79]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "When the blessed Holy One brings judgment upon a nation, He first executes judgment upon the prince appointed over them above, as is written: *I will punish the host of the heights on high and the kings of the earth upon the earth* (Isaiah 24:21).[80] What judgment is inflicted upon that prince above? He is passed through that flowing, gushing river of fire, and then his dominion is eliminated.[81] Immediately it is proclaimed in heaven: 'The dominion of so-and-so has been removed!' [7a] That voice reaches all those heavens, finally reaching those ruling this

world. A voice issues, proclaiming throughout the world, reaching birds, children, and those human fools who are unaware."[82]

A new king, arose [*over Egypt who did not know Joseph*] (Exodus 1:8).

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "*A new king*, really, for he innovated decrees that no other king had issued previously.[83]

"*Who did not know Joseph*—all the goodness that Joseph performed in the land of Egypt, as is written: *Joseph brought all the silver to the house of Pharaoh* (Genesis 47:14), and how he sustained them in the years of famine. All this he failed to remember, pretending not to know."[84]

Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Yehudah were sitting and studying Torah in the presence of Rabbi Shim'on. Rabbi Yehudah said, "Concerning what is written: *A new king arose over Egypt*, we have learned that he arose on his own. Whereas he had been lowly, he arose; he was not worthy of being king and through wealth arose."

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Exactly like King Ahasuerus, who was not worthy of being king and arose on his own, and sought to eliminate Israel from the world.[85] Here too, he was unworthy of royalty and arose on his own, and sought to eliminate Israel from the world, as is written: *He said to his people, 'Look, the people of the sons of Israel is more numerous and vast than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them…'* (Exodus 1:9–10). When a king arose above, a king arose below."[86]

He opened, saying, "*An utterance concerning Egypt: See,* YHVH *rides on a swift cloud and He is coming to Egypt. The godlings of Egypt will tremble before Him…* (Isaiah 19:1).[87] Come and see: All kings of the world and all nations of the world are as nothing before the blessed Holy One, as is written: *All the inhabitants of earth are considered as*

nothing. He does as He wishes with the host of heaven… (Daniel 4:32).[88] Now here, in Egypt, even though the blessed Holy One displayed all those mighty acts and a raised hand, what is written? *See, YHVH rides on a swift cloud and He is coming to Egypt*. Why is it different with all other nations of the world, where it was not so? For look: the blessed Holy One issued a decree and it was enacted! Whereas here, He Himself came, as is written: *and He is coming to Egypt*, and similarly: *I will pass through the land of Egypt—I, YHVH* (Exodus 12:12).[89]

"Well, because the King was coming to bring out *Matronita* who was there; in honor of *Matronita*, He came. So the blessed Holy One wished to honor Her and came to Her to raise Her, extending His hand—as He will do one day at the end of the exile of Edom."[90]

Rabbi Yeisa said, "If so—that it was because of *Matronita*—then look, in the exile of Babylon, *Matronita* was there! Why wasn't it so?"[91]

He replied, "Look at what we have learned: Sin was the cause! For they took foreign wives, inserting the holy sealed covenant into another domain. Therefore, they were deprived of signs and miracles intended to be performed for them. Not so in Egypt, where they were all *tribes of Yah*—as *children of Israel* they entered, as *children of Israel* they emerged.[92]

"In the exile of Edom, the blessed Holy One wants to be glorified in the world and to come Himself to raise *Matronita* and shake the dust from Her. Woe to the one who appears before Him there when He says, *Shake off the dust, arise; sit enthroned, O Jerusalem! Free yourself from the fetters on your neck* (Isaiah 52:2). Who is the nation or king who will stand before Him? *The godlings of Egypt will tremble before Him* (Isaiah 19:1). *Godlings of Egypt* does not refer to stones and wood, but rather to those upper rungs appointed over their lowly rites.[93]

“Wherever Israel are exiled, the blessed Holy One seeks for them and brings suit against those nations.[94] What is written? *Thus says YHVH: To Egypt My people went down at first, to sojourn there; Assyria has oppressed them for nothing* (Isaiah 52:4). The complaint brought by the blessed Holy One against Assyria, saying: ‘See what Assyria has done to Me! For look, Egypt, upon whom I executed all those judgments—when My people descended there to dwell among them, the Egyptians welcomed them, providing them the finest of the land, the land of Goshen. Even though they oppressed them in exile, they did not confiscate the land from them, as is written: *Only in the land of Goshen, where the Children of Israel were, was there no hail* (Exodus 9:26). That was the best of the land of Egypt, as is written: *in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses* (Genesis 47:11).[95] Moreover, they took nothing away from them, as is written: *but of the livestock of the Children of Israel…* (Exodus 9:6).[96] Even so, they were punished severely.

“‘But *Assyria has oppressed them* באפס (*be-efes*), *for nothing*—casting [7b] them into a land at the end of the world and taking away their land.[97] Now, if the Egyptians—who did so many favors to Israel—were punished so severely, then Assyria, Edom, and the other nations, all the more so, for they oppress them, kill them, and confiscate their money; all the more so, the blessed Holy One wishes for His name to be glorified, as is written: *I will display My greatness and My holiness, and make Myself known* [*in the eyes of many nations*] (Ezekiel 38:23). There, in Egypt, with one king; here, with all the kings of the world.”[98]

Rabbi Shim’on raised his hands and wept. He said, “Woe to one who is present at that time, and happy is one who is present at that time! Woe to one who is present at that time, because when the blessed Holy One comes to visit the Doe, He will observe who is standing by Her—all those

present with Her—examining all the actions of each and every one, and no virtuous one will be found, as is written: *I looked and there was no helper* (Isaiah 63:5). How many troubles upon troubles for Israel![99]

"Happy is one who is present at that time, because whoever maintains faith will attain that radiant joy of the King. Of that time is written *I will refine them as one refines silver, I will test them as one tests gold*… (Zechariah 13:9).

"After those troubles flare upon Israel and all kings of the nations conspire as one against them and countless evil decrees arouse—all designed alike against them—and trouble upon trouble befalls them, the later erasing all memory of the earlier, then a single column of fire will appear for forty days, poised from above to below, seen by all nations of the world.[100]

"On that day[101] King Messiah will arouse, emerging from the Garden of Eden, from the place called Bird's Nest, and he will arouse in the land of Galilee.[102] On the day that he emerges there, the whole world will tremble—all inhabitants of the world hiding in caves and crevices, afraid they will not survive. Of that time is written *They will enter caves in the rocks and clefts of the rocks, from fear of YHVH and the glory of His majesty, when He rises to terrify the earth* (Isaiah 2:19).[103]

"*From fear of YHVH*—trembling of the whole world.

"*And the glory of His majesty*—Messiah.

"*When He rises to terrify the earth*—when he rises and reveals himself in the land of Galilee. For that was the first place in the Holy Land to be destroyed; therefore he will be revealed there first of all, and from there he will arouse wars throughout the world.[104]

"After forty days of the column standing from earth to heaven in the eyes of the whole world and the Messiah revealing himself, a single star will rise from the side of the east, flaming in all colors—and seven other stars surrounding that star, waging war with it on all sides, three

times a day for seventy days, seen by all inhabitants of the world.[105] That star will battle them with flaming missiles—flashing, sparkling in every direction—striking them; swallowing them every single evening, discharging them by day, when they wage war before the eyes of the whole world.[106] And so on every day, for seventy days. After seventy days, that star will be hidden and Messiah will be hidden for twelve months; the column will return as before—Messiah hidden within, that column invisible.[107]

"After twelve months Messiah will be elevated within that column to heaven, where he will receive power and the crown of Kingdom. When he descends, that column of fire will be seen as before in the eyes of the whole world. Then Messiah will reveal himself, and many nations will gather round him, and he will arouse wars throughout the world. At that time the blessed Holy One will arouse His power before all nations of the world, and King Messiah will be known throughout the world, and all kings of the world will arouse to join together, waging war against him. And numerous bands of unbridled Jews will defect to their side, accompanying them to battle against King Messiah.[108] Then the whole world will darken for fifteen days, and many of the people of Israel will die in that darkness."

He opened, saying, "*If* [8a] *a bird's nest happens to be before you on the way, in any tree or on the ground—fledglings or eggs—and the mother crouching over the fledglings or over the eggs, do not take the mother together with the children. Surely send off the mother…* (Deuteronomy 22:6–7). We have established this verse, and it is one of the hidden commandments of Torah.[109] Within bellies of Torah, we possess hidden treasures—paths and ways known to the Companions, among those thirty-two paths of Torah."[110]

Rabbi Shim'on said to his son, Rabbi El'azar, "El'azar, when King Messiah arouses, countless other signs and miracles will arise in the world. Come and see: In the

Garden of Eden below, there is a single place hidden, concealed, unknown—embroidered with many colors; within are hidden a thousand palaces of yearning. No one enters them except Messiah, who abides constantly in the Garden of Eden.

"The entire Garden is encompassed by many crowns of the righteous, and Messiah stands over countless forces and camps of souls of the righteous. On festivals and Sabbaths, Messiah enters that place and delights in all those palaces.

"Within, within those palaces is another place—concealed and hidden, completely unknown, called Eden.[111] No one is capable of knowing it. Messiah is hidden outside, around that place, until a place called Bird's Nest is revealed to him—a place proclaimed by that bird who arouses in the Garden every day.[112]

"In that place are embroidered images of all other nations who have gathered against Israel to harm them. He enters that place, raises his eyes, and sees the patriarchs entering the ruins of the House of God, until he sees Rachel, tears on her face, and the blessed Holy One comforting her—but she does not want to be comforted, as is said: *She refuses to be comforted for her children* (Jeremiah 31:15).[113] Then Messiah raises his voice and weeps, and the whole Garden of Eden trembles and all those righteous ones there scream and weep. He screams and weeps a second time, and the heaven above the Garden trembles, along with 1,500 myriads of supernal camps, until reaching the supernal Throne.[114] Then the blessed Holy One beckons to that bird, who enters her nest and sits by Messiah, crying what she cries, arousing what is aroused.

"From within the holy Throne, that Bird's Nest and Messiah are summoned.[115] All elevate them above, and the blessed Holy One swears to them to eliminate the wicked kingdom from the world by the hand of Messiah and to avenge Israel—and all the goodness that the blessed Holy

One intends to do for His people.[116] Then the Bird's Nest, with Messiah in it, returns to its place, Messiah slipping into its hiding place as before.

"At the time that the blessed Holy One will arouse to restore the letters of His name perfectly—י (*yod*) with ה (*he*), restoring ו (*vav*) with ה (*he*), all becoming a single consummation[117]—then one star will arouse in the middle of the sky, colored purple, flashing and sparkling by day in the eyes of the world.[118] A flame of fire will rise in the sky from the side of the north, one facing the other for forty days, and all inhabitants of the world will be terrified.[119] At the end of forty days, the star and the flame will wage war before the eyes of all, and that flame will spread in a fiery blaze through the sky, intending to swallow that star. Numerous kings, rulers, nations, and peoples will be horrified by this.

"Then the star will ascend to the side of the south, overpowering that flame, and the flame will be swallowed in the sky bit by bit in the face of that star, until it cannot be seen at all.[120] Then the star will form pathways in the sky for twelve more days. After twelve days—during which all inhabitants of the world will tremble—the sun will darken in the middle of heaven, as it darkened on the day that the Temple was destroyed, until heaven and earth cannot be seen.[121] A sound will erupt in thundering comets, causing the earth to quake and countless forces and camps to perish.

"On that very day, out of the sound arousing throughout the world, a fiery flame will arouse in the great city of Rome, [8b] consuming many palaces, and many towers will fall, along with many commanders and princes on that day. All will prophesy evil against her,[122] and all inhabitants of the world will think that they cannot be saved.

"For twelve months from that day, all the kings will conspire and issue many edicts of persecution against Israel successfully, as has been said. Happy is one who chances

not to be there, and happy is one who chances to be there! The whole world will be in great confusion.[123]

"At the end of twelve months, a scepter will arise from Israel—King Messiah, arousing in the Garden of Eden.[124] All the righteous will crown him there and gird him with his weapons, engraved with letters of the Holy Name.[125] A voice will burst in the branches of the trees of the Garden, calling potently: 'Awaken, high holy ones! Rise before Messiah! Behold, the time has come for the Doe to unite with Her Husband.[126] And Her Husband wishes to avenge Her in the world and raise Her from the dust.'

"Then they will all rise and gird him with his weapons as before, Abraham on his right, Isaac on his left, Jacob in front of him, Moses the Faithful Shepherd above all the righteous, dancing along in the Garden.

"Once Messiah is arrayed by the righteous in the Garden of Eden, he will enter that place called Bird's Nest, as previously,[127] and see the image of the destruction of the Temple and the many righteous who were killed there. Then he takes from there ten garments, called 'garments of zeal,' and hides himself there for forty days, totally unrevealed.[128]

"At the end of forty days a single voice arouses, and from the supernal Throne the Bird's Nest is summoned along with King Messiah hidden within.[129] Then he is raised above, and when the blessed Holy One sees King Messiah dressed in garments of vengeance, girded with his weapons, He takes him and kisses him on the head.

"Then 390 firmaments tremble.[130] The blessed Holy One summons one of the firmaments that had been treasured away since the six days of Creation, and from one palace in that firmament He takes out a crown, engraved with holy names. With that crown the blessed Holy One was adorned when Israel crossed the sea, to take revenge on all of Pharaoh's chariots and horsemen, and with it He crowns King Messiah.[131]

“Once he is crowned and arrayed in all these adornments, the blessed Holy One takes him and kisses him as before. Who has seen holy chariots and supernal camps surrounding him, offering him so many presents and gifts, all adorning him?

“He enters into one palace there and sees all the supernal angels called Mourners of Zion—those who weep over the destruction of the Temple, weeping constantly[132]—and they give him a purple robe to wreak vengeance.[133] Then the blessed Holy One hides him away in the Bird’s Nest, where he is concealed for thirty days. Afterward, within that bird’s nest, he will descend from above to below, arrayed in all those adornments, surrounded by countless holy camps. The whole world will see a radiance hovering between heaven and earth, persisting for seven days, and all inhabitants of the world will be astonished and confounded, totally unable to comprehend—except for the wise, who know these mysteries; happy is their share!

“All those seven days, he will be adorned on earth in that bird’s nest. Where? *On the way* (Deuteronomy 22:6)—Rachel’s grave, for she stands at the crossroads, and he will gladden her and comfort her. Then she will let herself be comforted, and will rise and kiss him.[134]

“Afterward that radiance will ascend from that place and settle upon Jericho, city of trees. *In any tree* (ibid.)—Jericho.[135] Or *on* הארץ (*ha-arets*), *the land* (ibid.)—Jerusalem.[136] For twelve months he will be hidden in the radiance of the Bird’s Nest. After twelve months that radiance will extend between heaven and earth, settling upon the land of Galilee, where Israel’s exile began.[137] There he will reveal himself from the radiance of the Bird’s Nest, which will return to its place.[138]

“On that day the whole world will tremble as before, from one end of heaven to [9a] the other, and then the whole world will know that King Messiah has been revealed in the land of Galilee. All those who study Torah assiduously

will gather round him—though they are few in the world[139]—and through the merit of schoolchildren, his strength will be vitalized, overpowering. This is the mystery of *fledglings* (ibid.).[140] And if these are not to be found, then infants sitting in their mother's potent bosom,[141] suckling, as is said: *those weaned from milk, taken from the breast* (Isaiah 28:9)[142]—namely, *or eggs* (Deuteronomy, ibid.)—because for their sake *Shekhinah* dwells with Israel in exile, since as for the wise, few will be found at that time. Thus, *and the mother crouching* על (*al*), *for the sake of, the fledglings or for the sake of the eggs* (ibid.).[143]

"*Do not take the mother together with the children* (ibid.). For the matter does not depend on him—to deliver Her from exile—but rather on the supernal King. Once these children and sucklings empower King Messiah, then supernal Mother, crouching over them, arouses toward Her Husband. For twelve more months, it will be delayed; then Her Husband will come and raise Her from the dust, as is said: *I will raise the fallen booth of David* (Amos 9:11).[144]

"On that day King Messiah will begin to gather the exiled from one end of the world to the other, as is said: *If your banished lie at the ends of heaven*, [*from there YHVH your God will gather you*] (Deuteronomy 30:4).[145] From that day all the signs, miracles, and mighty acts that the blessed Holy One performed in Egypt, He will perform for Israel, as is said: *As in the days of your coming out of the land of Egypt, I will show him wonders* (Micah 7:15)."[146]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "El'azar, all of these matters you will find in the mystery of thirty-two paths within the Holy Name.[147] Until these miracles arouse in the world, the mystery of the Holy Name is incomplete and love is not aroused,[148] as is said: *I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by gazelles* (Song of Songs 2:7)—צבאות (*tseva'ot*), *gazelles*: the King, called *Tseva'ot*, Hosts.[149]

"*Or by does of the field* (ibid.)—other forces and camps below.[150]

“*That you neither awaken nor arouse love* (ibid.)—right hand of the blessed Holy One, called Love.[151]

“*Until she desires* (ibid.)—She who lies in the dust—and the King’s desire be for Her.[152]

“Happy is the one who is worthy of being in that generation! Happy is he in this world, and happy is he in the world that is coming!”

Rabbi Shim’on raised his hands in prayer to the blessed Holy One, and prayed. Afterward, Rabbi El’azar and Rabbi Abba came and sat before him. As they were sitting, they saw a ray of daylight darken; a jet of fiery flame plunged into the Sea of Tiberias, and that whole place trembled.[153]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “Now is the time that the blessed Holy One remembers His children and sheds two tears into the Great Sea. As they descend, they meet this jet of flame, sinking together into the sea.” Rabbi Shim’on wept, and the Companions wept.[154]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “I have already aroused mysteries of the letters of the Holy Name, in the secret of His arousal toward His children.[155] Now, however, I must reveal something that no one else is permitted to reveal. Yet the merit of this generation will sustain the world until King Messiah appears!”[156]

Rabbi Shim’on said to Rabbi El’azar and Rabbi Abba, “Stand in position!” Rabbi El’azar and Rabbi Abba stood.

Rabbi Shim’on wept again, and said, “Woe! Who can endure what I have seen? The exile will persist! Who can bear it?”[157]

He too rose, and said, “*O YHVH our God! Lords other than You possessed us, but only by You will we utter Your name* (Isaiah 26:13). This verse has been established, but this verse contains a supernal mystery within faith.[158] אלהינו יהוה (*YHVH Eloheinu*), *YHVH our God*—beginning of supernal mysteries, source of all radiance of lamps, all kindling. Upon

there depends the whole mystery of faith; this name reigns over all.[159]

"*Lords other than You possessed us*. For no one but this supernal name rules over the people of Israel, yet now in exile another rules over them.[160]

"לְבַד בְּךָ (*Levad bekha*), *Only by You*—mystery of the Holy Name, totality of twenty-two letters. Assembly of Israel is blessed only by this name called בְּךָ (*bekha*), *by You*, as is said: *to whom You swore* בְּךָ (*bakh*), *by Yourself* (Exodus 32:13); בְּךָ (*Bekha*), *By you, will Israel bless* (Genesis 48:20); *For* בְּךָ (*bekha*), *by You, I rush a barrier* (Psalms 18:30).[161]

"When perfection prevails, one does not separate from the other. And it is forbidden [9b] to separate one from the other—Wife from Her Husband—neither in thought nor utterance, so as not to manifest division. Now in exile, due to constant distress we generate division, uttering that name apart from Her Husband—for She lies in the dust. Thus, לְבַד בְּךָ (*Levad bekha*), *Apart from You, we utter Your name*—apart from Her Husband, we utter this name in separation; for we are far from You, and others dominate us, and *Your name* is separated from the name called בְּךָ (*bekha*).[162]

"This applies to days of exile. For the first exile was from the First Temple, and the First Temple is mystery of the first ה (*he*). Corresponding to Her seventy years, the exile of the First Temple lasted seventy years, and for those seventy years Mother was not found crouching over them, and there was separation from the supernal Name, mystery of supernal ה (*he*).[163] Then י (*yod*), supernal mystery, withdrew above, above to *Ein Sof*, and the holy, supernal First Temple did not gush a flow of living waters, for Her spring had withdrawn. She is seventy years of exile, because She is called seven years, as is said: *He built it seven years* (1 Kings 6:38).[164]

"Now, if you say that the kingdom of Babylon ruled above, in the mystery of seventy years—perish the thought!

Rather, the flowing light of supernal Mother illumined, cascaded below. When Israel sinned and the kingdom of Babylon gained dominion, that radiance was covered and darkened, and holy lower ones did not shine. Since the lower ones did not shine, on account of the reign of the kingdom of Babylon, that light withdrew and that supernal bubbling, gushing spring—mystery of י (*yod*)—withdrew above, above to *Ein Sof*. Then those seventy years did not shine, and the withheld radiance surely constituted the exile of seventy years.[165]

"When the dominion of Babylon was eliminated, all of Israel did not return, purifying themselves, becoming a perfect treasure as before; rather, little by little, in disarray. So, when perfection was lacking—as lower ה (*he*) began to prevail—י (*yod*), supernal bubbling flow, did not descend to illumine as potently as before; rather, little by little, erratically, because they were not fittingly pure. Consequently the supernal flow did not gush or illumine, shining only little by little, due to constriction of the left.[166]

"Therefore many wars were declared against Israel, until darkness covered the earth; lower ה (*he*) darkened, falling to earth, and the upper flow withdrew as before, because the kingdom of Edom grew strong and Israel relapsed into decay. So ה (*he*)—the Second Temple—was destroyed, and all Her twelve tribes, corresponding to the number of their camps, are in exile in the kingdom of Edom.[167] The supernal flow withdrew from that flow above Her, as is said: *The righteous one loses* (Isaiah 57:1)—*loses* that flow of the supernal spring, gushing from above. Then ה (*he*)—Second Temple—suffered separation, going into exile with all those twelve tribes and their camps.[168] Twelve tribes amount to a great number, and since mystery of ה (*he*) is among them, exile is prolonged for that whole number.[169]

"Mystery of mysteries, transmitted to the wise of heart. Ten tribes, 1,000 years; two tribes, 200 years."[170]

Tears began to fall. He opened, saying, "*She weeps bitterly in the night, her tears upon her cheek* (Lamentations 1:2).[171] At the end of twelve tribes in exile, night darkens for Israel until ו (*vav*) arouses at the time of 66 years. After twelve tribes, constituting 1,200 years of exile, and after 66 years of darkness of night, then *I will remember My covenant with Jacob* (Leviticus 26:42)—arousal of the letter ו (*vav*), soul of the house of Jacob. This is the mystery of *All the souls of the house of Jacob: sixty-six* (Genesis 46:26–27), which is ו (*vav*), soul of Second Temple—mystery of lower ה (*he*). This is ו (*vav*), mystery of 66—60 for arousal of Jacob, 6 for arousal of Joseph. Therefore it is וו (*vav*), two in a single bond, a single mystery.[172]

"From then on, the blessed Holy One will arouse those signs and miracles [10a] that we have mentioned, and those troubles we have mentioned will arouse upon Israel. This is the mystery of *and also My covenant with Isaac* (Leviticus 26:42).[173] Afterward, when King Messiah wages wars throughout the world with the right hand of the blessed Holy One—as is said: *Your right hand, O YHVH, glorious in power* (Exodus 15:6)—then, *and also My covenant with Abraham I will remember*; and afterward, *and the land I will remember* (Leviticus, ibid.)—final ה (*he*).[174] Of that time is written *YHVH will be king over all the earth; on that day YHVH will be one and His name One* (Zechariah 14:9).[175]

"At the end of 66 more years—constituting 132 years—the letters of the Holy Name will appear, perfectly engraved above and below, fittingly. This is the mystery of ה ה (*he, he*), upper and lower, and all those paths—32—included in the mystery of the letter ו (*vav*), ה ו ה (*he, vav, he*), mystery of consummation of 132.[176]

"At the end of 132 more years will be fulfilled *to grasp the corners of the land, so the wicked will be shaken out of it* (Job 38:13), and the Holy Land will be purified. The blessed Holy One will awaken the dead of the Holy Land, and they will rise, hosts upon hosts.[177] Then blockage of the

supernal bubbling flow will be roused—the letter י (*yod*)—and 32 paths will be fulfilled, flowing down. Letters will be sustained vitally: י ה ו ה (*yod, he, vav, he*)—until now, incomplete. Till the time that the supernal flow will stream in a union of letters into final ה (*he*)—this will be at the completion of 144 more years—and the remaining dead of Israel in other lands will awaken.[178]

"All this will come to be in the count of 408, when the world will be settled, turning firm and fragrant, and the Other Side will be eliminated from the world.[179] Lower ה (*he*) will be filled from the supernal flow, perfectly crowned and illumined. Of then is written *The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold* (Isaiah 30:26),[180] until there will be Sabbath of *YHVH*, gathering souls of holy delight—final ה (*he*)—throughout the entire seventh millennium. This is arousal of holy spirits of the people of Israel, to be clothed after Sabbath in other, holy bodies—to be called holy, as is written: *Whoever is left in Zion, who remains in Jerusalem, will be called holy* (Isaiah 4:3). Until here, words of sealed mysteries!"[181]

A new king arose (Exodus 1:8).[182] Rabbi Yose said, "Every day the blessed Holy One makes angels, messengers to the world, as is written: *He makes His angels spirits* (Psalms 104:4). It is not written *He made*, but rather *He makes*—because every single day *He makes* them.[183] At that time a certain prince was appointed over Egypt, and so it is written *A new king arose*—really *new*.[184]

"*Who did not know Joseph* (Exodus, ibid.)—for he issued from the place of separation, as is said: *From there it divides* (Genesis 2:10), and the first to separate is the river of Egypt. So, *who did not know Joseph*—place where all union abides, called Righteous."[185]

Rabbi El'azar and Rabbi Yose were walking on the way—they had set out by early light. They saw a star shooting from one side, and a star from the other side.

Rabbi El'azar said, "The time has now come for morning stars to praise their Master, and they are racing in fear and awe of their Master to praise and sing to Him, as is written: *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of Elohim shouted for joy* (Job 38:7), for they all praise Him in unison."[186]

He opened, saying, "*For the leader. On the doe of dawn. A song of David* (Psalms 22:1). *The doe of dawn*—for when the face of the east lightens and darkness of night dissipates, there is a deputy on the east, who draws a thread of radiance from the south, until the sun emerges, bursting those windows of the sky and illuminating the world. That thread-thin ray parts the dark of night. Then the doe of dawn approaches—black radiance in darkness coming to conjoin with day—and day shines, its radiance encompassing, absorbing that doe.[187] Concerning this doe—as she parts from the day, after being encompassed—David sang a song, as is written: *For the leader. On the doe of dawn*. And what did he say? [10b] *My God, my God, why have You abandoned me?* (ibid., 2)—for the doe of dawn had parted from the radiance of day."[188]

As they were walking, the day lightened and the time for prayer arrived. Rabbi El'azar said, "Let us pray, and walk on." They sat down and prayed; afterward, they rose and walked on.

Rabbi El'azar opened, saying, "*There is* הבל (*hevel*), *futility, that occurs on earth: there are righteous people who are treated according to the conduct of the wicked, and there are wicked people treated according to the conduct of the righteous. I say that this too is futility* (Ecclesiastes 8:14).[189] This verse has been established and discussed;[190] but *there is hevel*: King Solomon composed this book and based it on seven הבלים (*havalim*), breaths, upon

which the world subsists—namely seven pillars, supports of the world, corresponding to the seven heavens: *Vilon, Raqi'a, Sheḥaqim, Zevul, Ma'on, Makhon, Aravot*. Corresponding to them: הבל הבל הבלים הבל הבלים הכל (*Havel havalim, havel havalim, ha-kol havel*), *Breath of breaths, breath of breaths, all is breath!* (ibid. 1:2).[191]

"Just as there are seven heavens, there are others adjoining them, expanding, issuing from them. Similarly, there are other breaths, expanding, issuing from these—all mentioned by Solomon.[192]

"Here lies a mystery of wisdom: *There is a breath* issuing from those supernal breaths upon which the world subsists, and this *is actualized on earth*—sustained vitally, empowered potently by earthly action and by ascent rising from earth.[193] This is appointed over earth, all its power and vitality deriving from souls of the righteous plucked from earth while they are pure, before they have decayed, while still emitting fragrance—like Enoch, of whom is written *and he was no more, for God took him* (Genesis 5:24), taking him before his time had arrived, delighting in him.[194] And so with all the other righteous of the world, for we have learned: For two reasons the righteous are removed before their time. One, for sins of the generation, because when the wicked abound in the world, the righteous found among them are seized for their sins.[195] Another, when it is revealed before the blessed Holy One that they will decay later on; He removes from the world before their time, as is written: *There are righteous people who are treated according to the conduct of the wicked*—Judgment from above befalling them as if they had committed sins and acts of the wicked.

"For once Rabbi Yose son of Ya'akov from Kefar Ono[196] posed a question to Rabbi Me'ir, when Rabbi Akiva and his colleagues departed from the world, dying in that manner. He asked him, 'Now, is this written anywhere in the entire Torah?'[197]

“He replied, ‘Is it not? Look, Solomon said, *There are righteous people who are treated according to the conduct of the wicked*—Judgment from above befalling them as if they had committed acts of the wicked! *And there are wicked people treated according to the conduct of the righteous*—dwelling in peace and quiet in this world, no judgment befalling them, as if they had performed deeds of the righteous. Why? Because it is revealed before the blessed Holy One that they will repent, or that from them will issue offspring who will be true in the world—such as Terah, from whom issued seed of truth; Ahaz, from whom issued Hezekiah; and other wicked of the world.’[198]

“So, whether on this side or that, the *breath* that we have mentioned *is actualized* and empowered *on earth*.[199]

“Alternatively, *There is a breath that is actualized on earth*—as we have said, it is enhanced and empowered over the world. How? When *there are righteous people to whom it happens according to the conduct of the wicked*—actions of the wicked are offered to them, *conduct of the wicked*; yet they stand firm, in awe of their Lord, not wishing to defile themselves. Like many of the truly righteous, who—when offered such opportunities—are mighty in strength, fulfilling the will of their Lord and not sinning. Consequently, *breath is actualized on earth*, empowered potently.[200]

“*And there are wicked people to whom it happens according to the conduct of the righteous*—a *mitsvah*, an act of the righteous, is offered to them, and they attain and fulfill it. Like that robbing bandit prowling the mountains in a gang of non-Jews, and whenever a Jew passed through he would save him and protect him from them. Rabbi Akiva would proclaim of him: *There are wicked people to whom it happens according to the conduct of the righteous*.[201]

“Or like that wicked one [11a] in the neighborhood of Rabbi Ḥizkiyah. One night he accosted a certain woman who was walking to her daughter’s house. He was about to

seize her, and she said, 'I beg of you, honor your Master and do not sin with me!' He let her go and did not sin with her. You must admit, *There are wicked people to whom it happens according to the conduct of the righteous. I say that this too is* *havel, breath*. Just as *breath* is empowered by the righteous who are offered actions of the wicked yet do not sin, so too is it empowered by the wicked who are offered actions of the righteous and perform them.

"For we have learned: The blessed Holy One made righteous and wicked in the world. Just as He is glorified in the world by deeds of the righteous, so too is He glorified by the wicked when they perform a good deed. As is said: *He has made everything beautiful in its time* (Ecclesiastes 3:11). Woe to the wicked when he makes himself evil, clinging to his sin, as is said: *Woe to the wicked! Evil!…* (Isaiah 3:11)."[202]

He opened again, saying, "*I have seen everything in the days of my* *hevel, futility: a righteous one perishing in his righteousness, and a wicked one prolonging his life in his evil* (Ecclesiastes 7:15). This verse too has been established by the Companions.[203] However, when wisdom was granted to Solomon, he saw everything in the time when the moon reigned.[204]

"A righteous one—Pillar of the World.[205]

"אובד (*Oved*), *Perishing*—as is said: *The righteous one* אבד (*avad*), *loses* (Isaiah 57:1), in time of exile.

"*In his righteousness*—because She lies in the dust. As long as Israel are in exile, this *righteousness* accompanies them in exile, and therefore, *a righteous one* *oved, losing, on account of his righteousness*—for those supernal blessings do not reach Him.[206]

"*And a wicked one prolonging (his life) in his evil*—Samael, who prolongs peace and tranquility for Edom. How? *With his evil*—with that evil woman, woman of whoredom, fierce serpent. For peace and tranquility reach them only because he clings to that female.[207] Similarly

with other kingdoms, until the blessed Holy One raises that *booth of David*, as is written: *I will raise the fallen booth of David* (Amos 9:11).”[208]

A man from the house of Levi went and took a daughter of Levi (Exodus 2:1).[209]

Rabbi Yose opened, “*My love has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices*… (Song of Songs 6:2).[210] *My love has gone down to his garden*—Assembly of Israel, for She is a bed of spices, encompassing all aspects of spices and fragrances of the world. In the hour when the blessed Holy One descends to this garden, all souls of the righteous who are crowned there emit fragrance, as is said: *the fragrance of your oils, finer than all spices* (ibid. 4:10)—souls of the righteous. For Rabbi Yitsḥak said, ‘All those souls of the righteous who have been in this world and all those souls destined to descend to this world all exist in this garden. In the earthly garden they all retain the image and form they assumed in this world.’[211]

“This secret has been transmitted to the wise. Spirit descending to human beings, deriving from the side of the female, is always engraved like a seal. The form of a human body in this world protrudes, while spirit is engraved within. When spirit is stripped from the body, that spirit protrudes in the earthly garden in the actual form and image of its body in this world, because it always functioned as a seal.[212]

“Therefore She says, *Set me as a seal* (Song of Songs 8:6). Just as a seal is engraved inward, forming a protruding shape outward, similarly with Her.[213] And spirit, deriving from Her side, follows that pattern precisely in this world, engraved inwardly. When it is stripped from the body and enters the earthly garden, the atmosphere there protrudes that engraving to be formed outwardly, and it forms a protrusion corresponding to the form of the body in

this world. Above, the soul—deriving from the Tree of Life—is bound there above in the bundle of life, to delight in *the beauty of YHVH*, as is said: *to gaze upon the beauty of YHVH and to contemplate in His temple* (Psalms 27:4).[214]

"*A man went* (Exodus 2:1)[215]—Gabriel, as is said: *The man Gabriel, whom I had seen before in a vision* (Daniel 9:21).[216]

"*From the house of Levi*—Assembly of Israel, who comes from the side of the left.[217]

"*And took a daughter of Levi*—the soul.[218] For we have learned: In the hour when the body of a righteous one is born in this world, [11b] the blessed Holy One summons Gabriel, who takes that soul in the Garden and brings it down to this body of the righteous one born in this world. He is appointed over it and protects it.[219]

"Now, you might say, 'The angel appointed over spirits of the righteous is named *Lailah*, Night. How can you say that it is Gabriel?' Well, certainly so! Because he comes from the side of the left, and whoever comes from the side of the left is called so.[220]

"*A man went*—Amram.

"*And took a daughter of Levi*—Jochebed.[221] A divine echo descended and told him to couple with her, because the time neared for Israel's deliverance by the son who would be born to them.[222] The blessed Holy One assisted him, for we have learned: *Shekhinah* was poised above their bed, and their desire joined indivisibly with Her. Therefore, *Shekhinah* never withdrew from the son they engendered, as is written: *Sanctify yourselves and be holy* (Leviticus 11:44). A human sanctifies himself below—the blessed Holy One sanctifies him from above. Just as their desire focused on joining *Shekhinah*, so She joined in the very act they performed."[223]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "Happy are the righteous, whose desire is for clinging to the blessed Holy One constantly! Just as they cling to Him constantly, so He clings to them,

never abandoning them. Woe to the wicked, whose desire and clinging is distant from Him! Not only do they distance themselves from Him; they cling to the Other Side![224]

"Come and see: From Amram, who clung to the blessed Holy One, issued Moses—from whom the blessed Holy One never departed, to whom *Shekhinah* clung constantly. Happy is his share!"[225]

The woman conceived and bore a son, and she saw that he was good (Exodus 2:2).[226] What does this mean: *that he was good?*

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "That he was born circumcised, for the mystery of covenant is called *good*, as is written: *Say of the righteous one that he is good* (Isaiah 3:10)."[227]

Rabbi Yose said, "She saw the radiance of *Shekhinah* shining in him, for the moment he was born the whole house filled with light, as is written: *She saw that he was good*, and similarly: *God saw that the light was good* (Genesis 1:4). Therefore it is written *that he was good*—he was everything!"[228]

And she hid him three months (Exodus 2:2). *Three months*—what does this signify?

Rabbi Yehudah said, "This intimates a hint that Moses was not recognized in supernal radiance until three months, as is written: *On the third new moon* (Exodus 19:1). For then Torah was transmitted by him and *Shekhinah* revealed Herself to him before the eyes of all, as is written: *Moses went up to Elohim, and YHVH called to him* (ibid., 3).[229]

"*When she could no longer hide him* (Exodus 2:3)—for until then his speaking with the blessed Holy One was not perceived, but it is written: *Moses would speak, and God would answer him in a voice* (ibid. 19:19).[230]

"*She took a papyrus basket for him* (Exodus 2:3)—alluding to the ark in which the tablets of the covenant were placed. *A papyrus basket* is the Ark of the Covenant.[231]

“ותחמרה (*Va-taḥmerah*), *And smeared it, with bitumen and pitch* (ibid.)—for that *basket*, which is the Ark, was overlaid inside and out.”[232]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “This is the Torah, which the blessed Holy One החמירה (*heḥmirah*), made stringent, with positive and negative *mitsvot*.[233]

“*And she placed the child in it* (ibid.)—Israel, as is said: *When Israel was a youth, I loved him* (Hosea 11:1).[234]

“*And placed it* בסוף (*ba-suf*), *in the reeds* (Exodus, ibid.)—for the commandments of Torah were not stringently observed until סוף (*sof*), the end: when Israel entered the Land at the end of forty years.[235]

“*By* שפת היאור (*sefat ha-ye’or*), *the bank of the Nile* (ibid.)—by the word of those who teach אורייתא (*oraita*), Torah, and statutes to Israel.”[236]

“*A man went* (Exodus 2:1)—blessed Holy One, as is written: *YHVH is a man of war* (ibid. 15:3).[237]

“*From the house of Levi* (ibid. 2:1)—blessed Holy One, the place where supernal Wisdom and that river join as one, never separating. *From* this *house of Levi*, Leviathan was released for joy in the world, as is written: *Leviathan whom You formed to play with* (Psalms 104:26).[238]

“*And took a daughter of Levi* (Exodus 2:1)—blessed Holy One, the place where radiance of the moon shines.[239]

“*The woman conceived and bore a son* (ibid., 2)—*the woman*, surely! As is said: *This shall be called Woman* (Genesis 2:23). At first, *daughter;* [12a] and now, *woman*! But so we have learned: Until she is married, a woman is called *daughter;* after she marries, she is called *woman*. And here, *daughter* and *woman*—all a single rung.[240]

“*And she hid him three months* (Exodus 2:2)—three months during which harsh Judgment prevails in the world. And which are they? Tammuz, Av, and Tevet.[241] What does this indicate? That before Moses descended to the world, he existed above; so *Shekhinah* coupled with him from the day he

was born. Based upon this, Rabbi Shim'on said, 'Spirits of the righteous exist above before descending to the world.'[242]

"*When she could no longer hide him, she took a papyrus basket for him* (Exodus 2:3). What does this mean: *She took a papyrus basket for him*? She covered him with Her signs, so that he would be protected from those fish who swim the waters of the Great Sea, as is written: *gliding creatures there innumerable* (Psalms 104:25). She covered him to be protected from them with a precious covering of the aspect of Jubilee, of two colors: white and black. And She signaled to him to swim among them at another time, to receive the Torah.[243]

"*Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe at the Nile* (Exodus 2:5)—the one coming from the side of the left, of harsh Judgment, as is said: *to bathe at the Nile—at the Nile*, precisely; not *at the sea*![244]

"Now, you might say, 'Look at what is written: *and your staff with which you struck the Nile* (Exodus 17:5)—Moses struck only the sea, yet Scripture calls it *the Nile*!' Well, *the Nile* was struck by Aaron with the help of Moses, so Scripture considers it as though he did it himself. Similarly, *Seven full days passed after YHVH struck the Nile* (ibid. 7:25)—yet Aaron struck it! However, since it derived from the aspect of the blessed Holy One, Scripture states: *YHVH struck*. Afterward, it is attributed to Moses.[245]

"*Her maidens walking along the Nile* (Exodus 2:5)—other camps coming from this side.[246]

"*She opened it and saw him, the child* (ibid., 6). ותראהו (*Va-tir'ehu*), *and saw him*—the verse should read ותראה (*va-tir'eh*), *and saw*. Why *va-tir'ehu*?[247] Rabbi Shim'on said, 'You cannot find a word in the Torah that does not contain supernal, precious mysteries![248] We have learned as follows: The insignia of the King and *Matronita* appeared in him—the mark of ו, ה (*vav, he*). Immediately, *she had compassion on him*… (ibid.).'[249]

“Until here, above; from here on, below, except for this verse:[250]

“*His sister stationed herself afar* (Exodus 2:4). *His sister stationed herself*—whose sister? The sister of the one who calls Assembly of Israel *my sister*, as is said: *Open to me, my sister, my love* (Song of Songs 5:2).[251]

“*Afar*—as is said: *Afar, YHVH appeared to me* (Jeremiah 31:3).[252]

“What is implied? That the righteous who have not descended to the world are known above to all—especially Moses. Further, that souls of the righteous are drawn from a supernal site, as we have established. We have learned the mystery of the matter, for this implies that just as father and mother generate a body on earth, so all aspects—whether above or below—come into being from male and female. They have already established the secret that is written: *Let the earth bring forth a living soul* (Genesis 1:24). *The earth*—Assembly of Israel. *A living soul*—soul of supernal Adam, as has been said.”[253]

Rabbi Abba came and kissed him.[254] He said, “Surely, you have spoken well! Certainly so! Happy is the share of Moses, faithful prophet, beyond all other prophets of the world!”

His sister stationed herself (Exodus 2:4)—Wisdom, as is said: *Say to wisdom, “You are my sister”* (Proverbs 7:4).[255]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “The decree of Judgment has never withdrawn from the world, for whenever Israel sinned, Judgment accused them, and then *his sister stationed herself afar. Afar*—as is said: *Afar, YHVH appeared to me* (Jeremiah 31:3).[256]

“*Pharaoh’s daughter came down to bathe at the Nile…* (Exodus 2:5). The moment that Israel ceased from Torah, immediately *Pharaoh’s daughter came down to bathe at* היאור (*ha-ye’or*), *the Nile*—the attribute of Judgment

descended [12b] to bathe in the blood of Israel, because of humiliation of אורייתא (*oraita*), Torah.[257]

"*Her maidens walking along the Nile* (ibid.)—nations pursuing them.[258]

"*Along ha-ye'or, the Nile*—because of humiliation of *oraita*, Torah, and its teachers, for they let it slip out of their hands."[259]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Everything in the world depends upon repentance and upon the prayer that one offers to the blessed Holy One—especially one who sheds tears in his prayer, for there is no gate that those tears cannot enter.[260] What is written? *She opened it and saw the child* (Exodus 2:6). *She opened*—*Shekhinah*, who stands over Israel like a mother over her children, and She always opens in their defense.

"As soon as She opened, *she saw the child—a child of delight* (Jeremiah 31:20), Israel, who sin before their King in everything and immediately turn back in repentance, crying before Him like a son before his father. What is written? *And look, a boy crying!* (Exodus 2:6)—once he cries, all evil decrees of the world are annulled. What is written? *She had compassion on him*—aroused in mercy for him, taking pity on him.[261]

"*She said, 'This is one of the children of the Hebrews*' (ibid.)—not one of the children of other nations, who are stiff-necked and hard-hearted. *One of the children of the Hebrews*—tender-hearted from their fathers and mothers, to return to their Lord.[262]

"*She called the child's mother* (Exodus 2:8)—who was weeping, as is written: *A voice is heard on a height—wailing, bitter weeping—Rachel weeping for her children…* (Jeremiah 31:15). He is crying, and the child's mother is crying."[263]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Of the time to come, what is written? *With weeping they will come, and with consolations I will guide them* (ibid., 9). What does this

mean: *With weeping they will come*? By virtue of the weeping of the child's mother, who is Rachel, they will come and be gathered in from exile."

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "The deliverance of Israel depends only upon weeping—when the tears of weeping shed by Esau before his father will completely end, as is written: *Esau raised his voice and wept* (Genesis 27:38)."

Rabbi Yose said, "That weeping wept by Esau and those tears brought Israel down into his exile. Once those tears cease through the weeping of Israel, they will come out of his exile, as is written: *With weeping they will come, and with consolations I will guide them…*"[264]

He turned this way and that way (Exodus 2:12).[265]

Rabbi Abba said, "*This way*—whether he possessed worthy deeds. *And that way*—whether a virtuous son was destined to issue from him. Immediately, *he saw that there was no man*—he saw by the Holy Spirit that no such son would issue from him."[266]

For Rabbi Abba has said, "How many wicked there are in the world who engender more virtuous children than the righteous! And a virtuous one issuing from a wicked one is more laudable—being pure from impure, light out of darkness, wisdom out of foolishness. This is finest of all!"

"*He saw, he saw* (Exodus 2:11–12)—by the Holy Spirit he saw and envisioned everything; so he gazed at him and killed him.[267] The blessed Holy One brought all this about so that he would go, just as Jacob went to that well, as is written: *He sat upon the well* (ibid., 15). Of Jacob is written *He looked, and here: a well* (Genesis 29:2). Of Moses is written *He dwelled in the land of Midian, and he sat upon the well*—because even though they shared a single rung, in this, Moses ascended higher."[268]

Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Yitsḥak were walking on the way. Rabbi Yose said, “That well seen by Jacob and seen by Moses—was it the same well dug by Abraham and Isaac or not?”[269]

He replied, “At the time that the world was created, this well was created; and on the eve of Sabbath at twilight, its mouth was created. This is the well that Jacob and Moses saw.”[270]

Matnitin.[271] Pursuers of truth, those who demand the mystery of faith, those who cling to the faithful cluster, those who know the ways of the Supreme King—draw near and listen![272]

When two ascend and emerge toward one, they receive it between two arms. Two descend to three; they are two, one between them. Two sit upon the seat from which prophets suckle. One between them, junction of all, absorbing all.[273] [13a]

That holy well stands beneath Him—Field of Holy Apples.[274] From this well were watered the flocks that Moses tended in the wilderness. From this well were watered the flocks that Jacob selected, when they were selected for his share—all those chariots, all those winged beings.[275]

Three pillars rest upon this well; from them, this well is filled.[276] It is called אדני (*Adonai*), My Lord; of this is written אדני אלהים (*Adonai Elohim*), *My Lord God, You Yourself have begun…* (Deuteronomy 3:24), and similarly: *Let Your face shine upon Your desolate sanctuary, for the sake of* *Adonai* (Daniel 9:17). אדון (*Adon*), Lord of, all the earth, as is written: *See, ark of the covenant, Lord of all the earth* (Joshua 3:11).[277] Within it is concealed one holy spring, flowing into it constantly, filling it. This is called יהוה צבאות (*YHVH Tseva’ot*), Lord of Hosts. Blessed is He forever and ever.[278]

The priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and drew water… (Exodus 2:16).[279]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "If this well is the well of Jacob, look at what is written of it: *When all the flocks were gathered there, they would roll the stone* [*off the mouth of the well*] (Genesis 29:3). Yet here, the daughters of Jethro did not need this; rather, *they came and drew water*—with no further effort!"[280]

Rabbi Ḥiyya replied, "Jacob removed it from the well. For it is written, when all the flocks gathered there: *They would put the stone back* (Genesis, ibid.), and concerning Jacob it is not written *he put the stone back*, because afterward it was not necessary. Look, at first water did not rise; as soon as Jacob appeared, water rose toward him. Similarly with Moses, water rose toward him, and that stone was no longer on the mouth of the well. Therefore, *they came and drew water*."[281]

Rabbi El'azar, Rabbi Abba, and Rabbi Yose were walking from Tiberias to Sepphoris. As they were walking, a certain Jew met them and joined them. Rabbi El'azar said, "Let each one say a word of Torah!"[282]

He himself opened, saying, "*He said to me, 'Prophesy to the* רוח (*ruaḥ*)*! Prophesy, O son of man, and say to the ruaḥ: Thus says YHVH: From four ruḥot come, O ruaḥ!*… (Ezekiel 37:9).[283] From this verse we know the place from which the *ruaḥ*, spirit, issues.[284] Now, could Ezekiel actually prophesy to the spirit, when it is written *No human has power over the spirit, to restrain the spirit* (Ecclesiastes 8:8)? Well, a human being has no power over the spirit, but the blessed Holy One has power over everything, and by His command Ezekiel was prophesying.[285]

"Further, that spirit had been in a body in this world, and therefore he prophesied to it: *From four ruḥot come, O ruaḥ!*—from the place demarcated by its supports in four directions of the world."[286]

The Jew leaped in front of him. Rabbi El'azar said to him, "What did you see?"

He replied, "I saw something!"

He said to him, "What is it?"

He replied, "If the spirit of human beings is clothed in the form of the body of this world, it should have been written *Thus says YHVH: From the Garden of Eden come, O ruaḥ!* Why *from four ruḥot*?"[287]

He said to him, "The spirit does not descend to this world until it ascends from the earthly Garden to the Throne resting on four supports. Having ascended there, it absorbs from the Throne of the King and descends to this world. The body is drawn from four directions of the world; spirit, similarly, draws from four directions upon which the Throne is established."[288]

That man said to him, "The leap that I leapt in front of you—I saw something of this aspect.[289] Because one day I was walking in the desert and I saw a tree desirable to look at, with a cave beneath it.[290] I approached and saw that the cave was emitting fragrances of every variety in the world. Steeling myself, I entered that cave and climbed down certain steps into a place that had many trees, and aromas and spices that I could not bear. There I saw a man with a scepter in his hand, standing in an entrance. When he saw me, he was astonished and stood next to me. He said, 'What are you doing here? And who are you?'

"I was very frightened. I said to him, 'My lord, I am one of the Companions. I saw such and such in the desert, and I entered this cave and came down here.'

"He said to me, 'Since you are one of the Companions, take this leaf of writing and give it to the Companions—those who know mysteries of the spirits of the righteous.'[291] [13b]

"He struck me with the scepter, and I fell asleep. During my sleep I saw countless forces and camps coming along the way in that place. The man struck with that scepter and

said, ‘Go by way of the trees!’ As they were going, they flew in the air and ascended—I didn’t know where. I heard sounds of many camps, and I didn’t know what it was. I woke up and didn’t see anything—I was frightened in that place.

“Eventually, I saw that man. He said to me, ‘Did you see anything?’

“I replied, ‘In my sleep I saw such and such.’

“He said to me, ‘On this way spirits of the righteous go to the Garden of Eden, entering there. And what you heard from them was their standing in the Garden in the form of this world and rejoicing over the spirits of the righteous entering there.[292] Just as the body is constructed in this world from the interweaving of four elements, taking form in this world, so is the spirit formed in the Garden from the interweaving of four spirits existing in the Garden. That spirit is clothed there and formed from them in the design of the image of the body formed in this world. And were it not for those four spirits, which are the airs of the Garden, the spirit would not be formed at all and would not be clothed in them. Those four spirits are interwoven as one, and that spirit is formed and clothed in them, just as the body is formed through the interweaving of the four elements of the world. Therefore, *From four ruḥot come, O ruaḥ!*—from those four by which it is clothed and formed. Now take this leaf of writing and go on your way, and give it to the Companions.’”[293]

Rabbi El’azar and the Companions came and kissed him on the head.[294] Rabbi El’azar said, “Blessed is the Compassionate One who sent you here, for surely this is lucidity of the word, and the blessed Holy One put this verse in my mouth!”[295]

He gave them that leaf of writing. As soon as Rabbi El’azar took it and opened it, a branching brow of fire darted out, surrounding him. He saw in it what he saw, and it flew out of his hands.[296] Rabbi El’azar wept, and said,

“Who can endure treasures of the King? *YHVH, who can abide in Your tent? Who can dwell on Your holy mountain?* (Psalms 15:1). Happy is this way, and that moment when we met you!”

From that day, Rabbi El’azar rejoiced, and he said nothing to the Companions.[297]

As they were walking, they came upon a well of water. They stood over it and drank of the water.

Rabbi El’azar said, “Happy is the share of the righteous! Jacob fled from his brother and he encountered a well. As soon as the well saw him, the waters recognized their master and rose toward him, rejoicing with him; there his mate coupled with him. Moses fled from Pharaoh and encountered that well, and the waters saw him, recognized their master, and rose toward him; there his mate coupled with him.[298]

“What is the difference between Moses and Jacob? Of Jacob is written *When Jacob saw Rachel… he approached and rolled the stone* [*off the mouth of the well*]… (Genesis 29:10). Of Moses, what is written? *The shepherds came and drove them off, and Moses rose and saved them*… (Exodus 2:17). Surely, Moses knew—once he saw the water rising toward him—that there he would meet his mate. Further, Holy Spirit never departed from him, and thereby he knew that Zipporah would be his mate. Moses said, ‘Surely, when Jacob came here and the waters rose toward him, he encountered a person who brought him into his house and provided him everything he needed. The same with me!’”[299]

That man said, “So I have learned: Jethro was an idolatrous priest. As soon as he saw that idolatry had no substance, he separated from its worship. The people rose and excommunicated him. When they saw his daughters, they drove them off, for previously they themselves used to shepherd his flock. Once Moses saw by the Holy Spirit that they were acting on account of idolatry, immediately *Moses*

rose and saved them and watered their flock—becoming totally zealous for the blessed Holy One."[300]

Rabbi El'azar said to him, "You are with us, but we don't know [14a] your name!"

He said, "I am Yo'ezer son of Ya'akov."

The Companions came and kissed him. They said, "Here you were with us, and we didn't know you!" They walked as one that whole day. The next day, they escorted him three miles and he went on his way.[301]

They said, "An Egyptian man rescued us" (Exodus 2:19).[302]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "The Companions have already established that the Holy Spirit sparkled within them: they spoke and did not know what they were speaking. This can be compared to a man who was dwelling in the wilderness and who had not eaten meat for many days. One day, a bear came to seize a lamb. It fled, with the bear pursuing, till they reached that man in the wilderness. He saw the lamb and grabbed it, and slaughtered it and ate meat."[303]

פרשת וארא

Parashat Va-Era

“I APPEARED” (EXODUS 6:2–9:35)

[22a] *Elohim spoke to Moses and said to him, “I am YHVH”* (Exodus 6:2).[1]

Rabbi Abba opened, “*Trust in YHVH forever and ever, for Yah YHVH is an eternal rock* (Isaiah 26:4).[2] *Trust in YHVH*—all inhabitants of the world should strengthen themselves through the blessed Holy One, placing their trust in Him.[3] If so, what is עדי עד (*adei ad*), *forever and ever*? That a person’s strength should be in the place that is sustenance and nexus of all, called *ad*, *ever*. This has been established, as is said: *In the morning ad consumes* (Genesis 49:27).[4]

“This *ad* is a place embracing all sides, to this side and that side, sustaining and linking an irremovable nexus.[5] This *ad* is the focus of the desire of all, as is said: *Ad is desire of hills of the world* (Genesis 49:26). Who are *hills of the world*? These are two mothers, females, called *world*, as is said: *from world to world* (Psalms 106:48)—Jubilee and Sabbatical, each one called *world*. These are called *hills of the world*, and their desire is for this *ad*, sustenance of all sides.[6] Why? Desire of Jubilee: to crown Him, streaming blessings upon Him, pouring over Him sweet fountains, as is written: *O daughters of Zion, come out and gaze upon King Solomon, upon the crown with which his mother crowned*

him (Song of Songs 3:11). Desire of Sabbatical: to be blessed by Him, illumined by Him. Surely, this *ad* is *desire of hills of the world*.[7]

"Therefore, *Trust in YHVH adei, as far as, ad*—for from there up is a place concealed and hidden, which cannot be grasped; a place from which worlds emerged and were formed, as is written: כי ביה יהוה צור עולמים (*ki be-Yah YHVH tsur olamim*), *for by Yah YHVH, He formed worlds* (Isaiah 26:4). That is a place hidden and sealed. So, *Trust in YHVH as far as ad*—until here, a human is permitted to contemplate; from here on, no human is permitted to contemplate, for it is hidden from all. Who is that? *Yah YHVH*, whence all worlds were formed. There is no one who comprehends that place."[8]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "A verse demonstrates this, as is written: *For ask now of primal days that were before you, from the day God created a human on the earth and from one end of heaven to the other end of heaven* (Deuteronomy 4:32)—until here, a human is permitted to contemplate; from here on, no one is able to comprehend.[9]

"Alternatively, *Trust in YHVH forever and ever*—all the days of a person's life, he should strengthen himself through the blessed Holy One. For so David said: *My God, in You I trust; let me not be shamed, let my enemies not exult over me* (Psalms 25:2)—whoever puts his trust and strength in Him fittingly cannot be harmed or shamed by anyone in the world.[10] Whoever places his strength in the Holy Name endures in the world. Why? Because the world is sustained by the Holy Name, as is written: כי ביה יהוה עור עולמים [22b] (*ki be-Yah YHVH tsur olamim*), *for by Yah YHVH, an eternal rock* (Isaiah 26:4)—צייר עלמין (*tsayyar almin*), formed worlds. For by two letters, worlds were created: this world and the world that is coming.[11] This world was created by Justice and endures through justice, as is written: *In the beginning Elohim created* (Genesis 1:1). Why? So that human beings would conduct themselves according to justice and not deviate from the path.[12]

“Come and see: *Elohim spoke to Moses* (Exodus 6:2)—decree of Judgment looming over him. What is written above? *Moses returned to YHVH, and said*, ‘אדני (*Adonai*), *My Lord*’ (ibid. 5:22)—spelled א ד נ י (*alef, dalet, nun, yod*). See the boldness of Moses! At the beginning of his prophesying, he was dissatisfied with this place and said, *Adonai, why have You done evil* [*to this people? Why did You send me?*] *Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name*, [*he has done evil to this people, and You surely have not rescued Your people!*] (ibid., 22–3). Who would speak like this? But Moses knew that another, higher rung awaited him.”[13]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “At first, when the house was given to him, he commanded it like a man commanding his household and saying whatever he wishes without fear; similarly, Moses spoke to his house without fear.[14]

“*Elohim spoke to Moses* (Exodus 6:2)—decree of Judgment, so וידבר (*vaydabber*), *spoke*. ויאמר (*Va-yomer*), *He said, to him* (ibid.)—another rung, of Compassion. Here, all is linked as one: Judgment and Compassion, as is written: *He said to him, ‘I am YHVH’* (ibid.).”[15]

Rabbi Yose said, “If it were written *Elohim spoke to Moses, ‘I am YHVH,’* then I would agree. But rather, it is written first *Elohim spoke to Moses*, and then *He said to him, ‘I am YHVH’*—implying rung after rung.”[16]

And Rabbi Yose said, “If Moses had not been master of the house, husband of *Elohim*, he would have been punished for what he said. But since he was, he was not punished.[17]

“This can be compared to a man who fell into a quarrel with his wife and had words with her. She started to complain. As soon as she began to speak, the king appeared and took up the word; she turned silent and stopped speaking. The king said to him, ‘Don’t you know that I am King, and you have spoken these words in my presence?’

“Similarly, as it were, with Moses: *Moses returned to YHVH, and said*, ‘*Adonai, My Lord, why have You done evil* [*to this people?*…] (Exodus 5:22). Immediately, *Elohim spoke to*

Moses—starting to complain. Immediately, the King took up the word: *He said to him, 'I am YHVH*—Do you not know that I am King, and you have spoken these words in My presence?'[18]

"*I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El Shaddai* (Exodus 6:3). Why did He change the name here from those before?[19] Well, this can be compared to a king who had an unmarried daughter and also had a beloved friend. When the king wanted to speak with that friend, he would send his daughter to speak with him—speaking with him through his daughter.[20] The time came for his daughter to be married. On her wedding day, the king said, 'From now on, call my daughter Highness of Wisdom Matronita.[21] Until now, I spoke through her to whomever I spoke. From now on, I will tell her husband, and he will tell whomever is necessary.'

"Some days later, her husband had words with her in the presence of the king. Before she could answer, the king took up the word, saying to him, 'Am I not the king, with whom, until this day, no person has spoken except through my daughter—while her name was such and such, when she was still unmarried? And you—I have given you my daughter and spoken with you openly, something I have done for no one else!'

"Similarly, *'I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El Shaddai*—when She was in My house, not yet married. They did not speak with Me face-to-face, as I have done with you. Yet you, at the beginning of your words, have spoken to My daughter in My presence words such as these!' Therefore, *'I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El Shaddai, but by My name YHVH I was not known to them*—speaking with them on the rung I have spoken with you!'"[22]

Rabbi Yeisa opened, "*Of David. A psalm. The earth and her fullness are YHVH's*… (Psalms 24:1)—Holy Land of Israel,

poised to be watered by Him, blessed by Him first; afterward, from Her the whole world is watered.

"*The world and those who dwell in her* (ibid.)—the rest of the earth, which drinks from Her. How do we know this? As is written: *He judges the world with righteousness* (ibid. 9:9).[23]

"*For He founded her upon seas* (ibid. 24:2) [23a]—seven pillars supporting the earth, which are seven seas, and the Sea of Galilee rules over them."[24]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Do not say 'rules over them,' but rather 'is filled by them.'"[25]

"*And established her upon rivers* (ibid.). Who are *rivers*? As is said: *Rivers have raised their thunder; rivers raise their pounding* (ibid. 93:3). These *rivers* correspond to what is said: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden* (Genesis 2:10). Thus, *and established her upon rivers*.[26]

"Come and see: This land is called Land of Israel. Why did Jacob, who is Israel, not rule over this like Moses? For look at what is written: *I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El Shaddai* (Exodus 6:3)—and nothing more! Well, because Jacob possessed the house below and was abandoned by the house above; yet with the house below he arrayed the house above in twelve tribes, in seventy branches. Moses possessed the house above and abandoned the house below. Consequently, even to Jacob the blessed Holy One spoke by *El Shaddai*, and nothing more; *but by My name YHVH I was not known to them* (ibid.)—speaking with them on this rung, which is higher."[27]

I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob (Exodus 6:3).

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "Jacob was Glory of the Patriarchs, for he is perfection of all.[28] Concerning all of them is written אל (*el*), *to, Abraham, el, to, Isaac*, whereas concerning him a single letter is added, as is written: ואל (*ve-el*), *and to, Jacob*—an extra ו (*vav*), for he is

most complete of all. Even so, he did not succeed in wielding it like Moses.[29]

"I also established My covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan (Exodus 6:4)—because they were circumcised. For whoever is circumcised inherits the land; for look, only a righteous one inherits the land, and whoever is circumcised is called righteous, as is written: *Your people, all of them righteous, will inherit the land forever* (Isaiah 60:21)! Whoever is circumcised and guards this sign of the covenant is called righteous. Come and see from Joseph, who for all his days was not called righteous until he guarded that covenant, sign of holy covenant. As soon as he guarded it, he was called righteous: Joseph the Righteous."[30]

One day Rabbi Shim'on was sitting with Rabbi El'azar, his son. Rabbi El'azar said, "This verse that is written: *I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob* (Exodus 6:3)—why *I appeared*? The verse should read *I spoke*."[31]

He replied, "El'azar, it is a supernal mystery! Come and see: There are colors that are seen, and colors that are not seen. These are a supernal mystery of faith, yet human beings do not know or contemplate.

"Those that are seen, no human attained until the patriarchs came and perceived them. Therefore it is written: *I appeared*, for they saw those colors that are revealed. Which are those? Colors of *El Shaddai*, colors in a supernal visionary mirror; these can be seen.[32]

"The colors above—concealed and unseen—no human has perceived except Moses. Therefore it is written: *but by My name YHVH I was not known to them* (ibid.)—'I was not revealed to them in supernal colors.' Now, if you say that the patriarchs knew nothing of them—they really did know, through those that are revealed.[33]

"It is written: *The enlightened will shine like the radiance of the sky, and those who turn many to*

righteousness, like the stars forever and ever (Daniel 12:3). *The enlightened will shine*. Who are *the enlightened*? The wise one who contemplates, on his own, things that human beings cannot utter. These are called *enlightened*.[34]

"*Will shine like the radiance of the sky*. What is זהר הרקיע (*zohar ha-raqi'a*), *the radiance of the sky*? The sky of Moses, standing in the middle; this *zohar, radiance*, is concealed and not revealed, standing above that sky in which colors can be seen. Although those colors can be seen within it, they do not glow with the radiance of the concealed colors.[35]

"Come and see: There are four lights. Three of them are concealed, and one revealed. A shining light. A light of radiance, shining like the heavens in purity. A light of purple, absorbing all lights. A light that does not shine but gazes toward these, receiving them, and they appear in it as in a crystal facing the sun. These three that we have mentioned are concealed, and stand above this one, [23b] which is revealed.[36]

"This mystery is the eye. In the eye revealed colors are traced within, yet none of them glow, because they exist in a light that does not shine. These are patterned after those concealed ones poised above them. These are the ones revealed to the patriarchs—to know those concealed glowing ones through these that do not glow. Those glowing ones, those concealed ones were revealed to Moses in that sky of his, and these stand poised above those colors seen in the eye.[37]

"This is the mystery: Close your eye and turn your eyeball, and those shining, glowing colors are revealed. Permission to see is granted only with eyes shut and concealed, for they are supernally concealed, standing above those colors that are seen and do not glow.[38]

"Of this we read: 'Moses attained the speculum that shines,' which stands above the one that does not shine. The rest of the inhabitants of the world, that speculum that does not shine. The patriarchs saw, through these revealed

colors, those concealed ones standing above those that do not shine. Therefore it is written: *I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El Shaddai*—in those colors that are seen. *But by My name YHVH I was not known to them*—concealed colors upon which Moses was worthy of gazing.[39]

"Mystery of the eye: concealed and revealed. Concealed, seeing the speculum that shines; revealed, seeing the speculum that does not shine. So, ואֵרָא (*va-era*), *I appeared*—in the speculum that does not shine, which is revealed and described in terms of רְאִיָה (*re'iyyah*), vision; whereas the speculum that shines is described in terms of knowing, as is written: *I was not known*."[40]

Rabbi El'azar and Rabbi Abba came and kissed his hands. Rabbi Abba wept, and said, "Woe, when you depart from the world, and the world is orphaned of you! Who will be able to illumine the words of Torah?"[41]

Rabbi Abba opened, saying, "*Say: Thus for life! And peace to you, peace to your house, and peace to all that is yours!* (1 Samuel 25:6). *Say:* כֹּה לְחַי (*Koh le-ḥai*), *Thus for life!* Now, didn't David know about Nabal? How could he say, *Say: Koh le-ḥai, Thus for life*?[42] However, that day was the holy day of Rosh Hashanah, when the blessed Holy One sits in judgment over the world, and for the sake of the blessed Holy One he said, *Say: Koh le-ḥai, Thus for life*!—to link *koh, thus, le-ḥai*, to the living one, on whom all life depends.[43]

"וְאַתָּה שָׁלוֹם (*Ve-attah shalom*), *And peace to you*. Why *ve-attah, And you*? The verse should read *attah, you*. However, all was spoken to the blessed Holy One, to bind the bond of faith fittingly.[44] From here we learn that one is forbidden to greet a wicked person first, and if he must, he should greet like David, who blessed the blessed Holy One, though it appeared that he spoke for [Nabal's] sake. Now, if you say that it was deception—no! For whoever exalts the blessed Holy One is not considered deceptive.[45] And whoever greets a righteous person first is considered as though he

greeted the blessed Holy One—all the more so my master, who is peace above and below!”[46]

I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as *El Shaddai* (Exodus 6:3).

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah opened, “*Happy is the human to whom* *YHVH* *imputes no iniquity* (Psalms 32:2).[47] How closed-minded human beings are, not knowing or contemplating the basis of their existence in the world![48] For when the blessed Holy One created the world, He formed the human being in His image and designed him in His array. Look, when Adam was created, he was prepared from the dust of the Temple below, and four directions of the world converged in that place! Those directions of the world joined four aspects that are the foundation of the world: fire and air, water and dust—joining four directions of the world, and from them the blessed Holy One prepared a single body, a supernal array. This body was composed of two worlds: this lower world and the world above.”[49]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “Come and see: Those four are primordial ones, mystery of faith, fathers of all worlds, mystery of the supernal holy chariot. They are fire, air, water, and dust—supernal mystery, fathers of all worlds, fathers of all! From those issue gold, silver, copper, and iron; and beneath [24a] them other metals, similar to them, corresponding to these.[50]

“Come and see: Fire, air, water, and dust—these are primordial ones, roots of above and below; those above and below are sustained by them. These are four, in four directions of the world: north, south, east, and west—four directions of the world, inhering in these four. Fire to the north, air to the east, water to the south, dust to the west. These four are linked with these four, and all of them are one; these generate four metals: gold, silver, copper, and iron—look, they are twelve, and all of them are one![51]

“Come and see: Fire is left, to the north, for fire contains the power of heat and its dryness is intense. North is its opposite, and one is blended with the other, becoming one. Water is on the right, to the south. In order to join them as one, the blessed Holy One made the blending of this like the blending of that. North is cold and wet, fire hot and dry; He switched them to the south. South is hot and dry, water cold and wet, and the blessed Holy One blended them as one. Water issues from the south and enters the north, and from the north flows water. Fire issues from the north and enters power of the south, and from the south issues power of heat to the world. For the blessed Holy One lends one to the other, merging them with one another, each lending his own to his fellow fittingly. Similarly, air and east, for each one lends to his fellow, intermingling to join as one.[52]

“Come and see: Fire from this side, water from that side, and they are in conflict—until *ruaḥ*, air, enters between them, embracing both sides, as is written: *and ruaḥ of Elohim hovering over the waters* (Genesis 1:2). For fire stands above on this side; water stands on the surface of the earth; *ruaḥ* enters between them, embracing both sides, mediating the conflict.[53] As for dust, water stands above her, along with air and fire, and she receives from them all, through the power of these three poised above her.[54]

“Come and see: Air and east. East—hot and wet. Air—hot and wet, therefore embracing two sides. For fire is hot and dry, water is cold and wet; air is hot and wet: the aspect that is hot grasps fire, the aspect that is wet grasps water. So it harmonizes between them, mediating the conflict of fire and water.[55]

“Dust is cold and dry, so it receives all of them, all of which thereby perform their actions. It receives from all of them, generating by their power nourishment for the world. For west embraces dust, which is cold and dry: the aspect that is cold is linked with north, which is cold and wet, since

cold is gripped by cold; so north joins west on this side. South is hot and dry: its dryness grasps the dryness of west on the other side, so west is linked on two sides.[56] So too, south is linked with east, for the heat of south is linked with the heat of east. And east is linked with north, for its wetness is linked with the wetness of north. Now there exists southeast, northeast, northwest, southwest—all intertwined, concatenate.[57]

"Similarly, north generates gold: from the aspect of fire's potency gold is produced, as is written: *From the north comes gold* (Job 37:22). Fire is linked with dust, generating gold, corresponding to what is written: *It has dust of gold* (ibid. 28:6). This is the mystery of *two cherubim of gold* (Exodus 25:18).[58]

"Water is linked with dust, and coldness with wetness generates silver.[59] Now, dust is linked with two sides—by gold and silver—and is placed between them. Air grasps water, grasps [24b] fire, producing two as one, namely *like the gleam of burnished bronze* (Ezekiel 1:7).[60] The dust that we have mentioned, when it is by itself in its dryness and coldness, generates iron; your mnemonic is: *If the iron is blunt and one has not whetted the edge* (Ecclesiastes 10:10). This dust is linked with all of them, all of whom thereby produce according to their pattern.[61]

"Come and see: Without dust, there is no gold, silver, or copper; for each one lends his own to his fellow, linking with one another. Dust is linked with all of them, for two sides embrace it—fire and water—and air draws near it because of these two, performing its action. Consequently, when dust joins them, it generates and engenders others, corresponding to their pattern. Corresponding to gold, dust engenders yellow dross, resembling genuine gold. Corresponding to silver, it engenders lead; corresponding to supernal copper, it engenders tin, inferior copper. Corresponding to iron, it engenders iron; your mnemonic is: *Iron together with iron* (Proverbs 27:17).[62]

“Come and see: Fire, water, air, dust—interconnected, interlinked, indivisible. This dust, after giving birth—they no longer interlink like those supernal ones, as is said: *From there it divides and becomes four riverheads* (Genesis 2:10); among these is division. For when dust gives birth by the power of three supernal ones, it brings forth four rivers, where precious stones are found—in one place, for it is written: *Bdellium is there, and lapis lazuli* (ibid., 12).[63] These precious stones number twelve, in four directions of the world, corresponding to the twelve tribes, as is written: *The stones shall be according to the names of Israel’s sons, twelve according to their names* (Exodus 28:21). And these are the twelve oxen beneath the sea.[64]

“Come and see: Though all four supernal sides that we have mentioned are interlinked, all of them sustaining above and below, what sustains the world most is *ruaḥ*, for thereby all exists. Soul exists only through *ruaḥ*, for if *ruaḥ* were lacking for even a moment, soul could not endure. Come and see: *Surely, without knowledge a soul is not good* (Proverbs 19:2)—soul without *ruaḥ* is not good and cannot exist.[65]

“Come and see: Those twelve that we have mentioned, which are twelve stones, are twelve oxen beneath the sea. Therefore, of those twelve princes is written *All the cattle for the ascent-offering, twelve…* (Numbers 7:87). All is supernal mystery. Whoever perceives these matters will perceive a mystery of supernal wisdom wherein lies the essence of all.”[66]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “Regarding what Rabbi Ḥizkiyah has said—that when the blessed Holy One created Adam, he was created from the dust of the Temple below—from the dust of the Temple above, a soul was placed within him. Just as when he was created from the dust below, three aspects—elements of the world—combined with it, so too when he was created from the dust above, aspects of supernal elements combined with it, and אדם (*adam*) was complete.[67]

This corresponds to what is written: *Happy is* האדם (*ha-adam*), *the human, to whom* YHVH *imputes no iniquity* (Psalms 32:2). When does YHVH *impute no iniquity*? When *there is no deceit in his spirit* (ibid.).[68]

"Come and see: Moses was more complete than the patriarchs, because the blessed Holy One spoke with him from a higher rung than all of them. Moses was innermost within the palace of the supernal King. Therefore it is written: *I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob* [*as El Shaddai, but by My name* YHVH *I was not known to them*] (Exodus 6:3). We have already established these words."[69]

Therefore say to the Children of Israel: "I am YHVH*. I will take you out…"* (Exodus 6:6).[70] Rabbi Yehudah said, "This verse is out of order, for it is written *I will take you out*, first, and then *I will rescue you from their bondage*, and then *I will redeem you*. It should read as follows: *I will rescue you*, first, and then *I will redeem you*, and then *I will take you out*. However, the essence of all, first; for the blessed Holy One wanted to gladden them first with the finest of all."[71]

Rabbi Yose said, "But the finest of all is: *I will take you to Me as a people and I will be* [25a] *Your God* (Exodus 6:7); yet He said this later! However, at that time there was nothing better for them than going out, because they thought that they would never escape their bondage, since they saw all the prisoners among them bound with knots of sorcery, unable to ever leave. Therefore, they were gladdened first with what was most precious to them of all.[72]

"Now, you might say, 'Once they left, [the Egyptians] could pursue them to harm them'—well, it is written: *I will rescue you from their bondage* (Exodus 6:6). And you might say, 'They will leave and be saved but not be redeemed'—well, the verse states: *I will redeem you with an outstretched arm* (ibid.)."[73]

[25b][74] *Moses spoke thus to the Children of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses out of shortness of breath and harsh bondage* (Exodus 6:9). What does this mean: *out of shortness of* רוח (*ruaḥ*), *breath*?[75]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "That they could not relax or take a deep breath."[76]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "*Out of shortness of ruaḥ, spirit*—that Jubilee had not yet released soul, and final spirit did not yet prevail, executing its judgments; so there was constriction of spirit. For whom? Final spirit, as we mentioned.[77]

"Come and see: *Look, the Children of Israel did not listen to me, and how will Pharaoh listen to me, and I am uncircumcised of lips?* (Exodus 6:12). But it is previously written: *No man of words am I…for I am heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue* (ibid. 4:10), and the blessed Holy One replied to him, *Who gives a mouth to a human being? Who makes him mute…?* (ibid., 11), and He said, *I Myself will be with your mouth* (ibid., 12). Would you imagine that it was not so? Yet now he says, *I am uncircumcised of lips*! If so, where is the word that the blessed Holy One promised him previously?[78]

"However, it is a mystery. Moses is voice, and speech, which is his word, was in exile; so he was 'uncircumcised'—obstructed from expressing words. He said, '*How will Pharaoh listen to me*, when my word is in exile? For I have no word! I am voice; word will be lacking, for She is in exile.' Consequently, the blessed Holy One made Aaron his partner.[79]

"Come and see: As long as speech was in exile, voice withdrew from it, and the word was obstructed, voiceless. When Moses appeared, voice appeared. Moses was voice without word, which was in exile; as long as speech was in exile, Moses proceeded as speechless voice. And so it continued until they approached Mount Sinai and the Torah was given, whereupon voice united with speech, and then

the word spoke, as is written: *Elohim spoke all these words* (Exodus 20:1). Then Moses became complete with the word fittingly—voice and speech as one in consummation.[80]

"Therefore Moses complained that he lacked the word—except for the time when it spoke in complaint against him, as is written: *Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name*, [*he has done evil to this people, and You surely have not rescued Your people!*] (Exodus 5:23). Immediately, *Elohim spoke to Moses* (ibid. 6:2).[81]

"Come and see that it was so! The word began to speak—and was interrupted, for the time had not yet arrived, as is written: *Elohim spoke*, and stopped, and another completed the word, as is written: *He said to him, 'I am YHVH'* (ibid.). For speech was in exile, and the time to speak had not arrived.[82]

"Come and see: Therefore Moses was incomplete at first—appropriately, because he is voice, coming for the sake of speech, to bring it out of exile. As soon as it came out of exile, and voice and speech united as one at Mount Sinai, Moses was completed and healed; voice and speech became as one in consummation.[83]

"Come and see: All the days that Moses was in Egypt, seeking to bring the word out of exile, the word did not speak. As soon as it came out of exile, that word—who is speech—led and guided Israel, but did not speak until they approached Mount Sinai, when it opened with Torah fittingly. Now, you might say, '*For Elohim* אמר (*amar*), *said, "Lest the people regret when they see battle, and go back to Egypt"* (Exodus 13:17).' However, it is not written *For* [*Elohim*] דבר (*dibber*), *spoke*, but rather *For* [*Elohim*] *amar*, which is silent intention of the heart, as we have already established."[84]

Rabbi Yehudah opened, "*I rose to open for my beloved, but my beloved had slipped away* (Song of Songs 5:5–6). Come and see: When Assembly of Israel is in exile, voice

withdraws from Her and word subsides. If She arouses, what is written? *'My beloved had slipped away*—for He withdrew from Me.' The word ceased, as is written: *Elohim spoke to Moses*—then stopped and turned silent. Afterward, voice completed: *He said to him, 'I am YHVH.'*[85]

[26a] *Elohim spoke to Moses and said to him, "I am YHVH"* (Exodus 6:2).

"*I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac*, ואל (*ve-el*), *and to, Jacob* (Exodus 6:3). With Jacob an additional ו (*vav*), for he is consummation of the patriarchs, as is said: *God of Abraham, God of Isaac*, ואלהי (*velohei*), *and God of, Jacob* (ibid. 3:6)—with Jacob an additional *vav*."[86]

Rabbi Yose said, "If so, look at what is written: *I am YHVH, God of Abraham your father* ואלהי (*velohei*), *and God of, Isaac* (Genesis 28:13)—with Isaac an additional *vav*!"[87]

He replied, "That was fine, because Jacob was alive—so he was included with Isaac, who had died. For as long as a person exists in this world, the Holy Name is not mentioned in relation to him; so he was included with Isaac. Now that Jacob had died, the entity reached its place, as is written: *I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac*, ואל (*ve-el*), *and to, Jacob*—with an additional *vav*.[88]

"*As El Shaddai* (Exodus 6:3)—'I appeared to them through the speculum that does not shine, not through the speculum that shines.' Now, you might say, 'They joined with the Female alone and no further!' Well, come and see: They never separate, as is written: *I also erected My covenant with them* (ibid., 4), for Covenant united with Her.[89]

"One should learn from the blessed Holy One, for He Himself said that He did not separate them, as is written: *as El Shaddai*, and then: *I also erected My covenant with them*—to sustain existence by unification.[90]

"*I also erected My covenant with them* [*to give them the land of Canaan*]—as has been said, whoever merits the

covenant inherits the land."[91]

One day, Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose were in the presence of Rabbi Shim'on. Rabbi Shim'on opened, saying, "*Fear the sword, for wrath brings punishments of the sword, so that you will know* שדון (*shaddun*) (Job 19:29)—written שדין (*she-din*), *that there is judgment*.[92] *Fear the sword*. Who is *the sword*? *A sword avenging with vengeance of the covenant* (Leviticus 26:25), for this sword stands poised to observe who betrays the covenant. Whoever betrays the covenant—the vengeance wreaked upon him is this sword, as is written: *for wrath brings punishments of the sword*. Why? Because whoever betrays the covenant disjoins desire, and the receiver does not receive, nor give to His place, for He does not arouse toward His place. Whoever preserves this covenant stimulates His arousal toward His place, and those above and below are blessed.[93]

"Who arouses this covenant toward His place? When the righteous appear in the world. How do we know this? From here, as is written: *I also erected My covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land of* מגוריהם (*megureihem*), *their sojournings* (Exodus 6:4). What is *megureihem*? As is said: גורו (*Guru*), *Fear, the sword*—for this is a place casting fear into the world; so *Guru, Fear, the sword*.[94]

"אשר גרו בה (*Asher garu vah*), *In which they sojourned* (ibid.)—whom they feared. From the day that they approached the blessed Holy One, they were in awe of Her, in supernal awe, to observe His commandments. For if concerning this, awe does not hover over a person's head, he will never be in awe of the blessed Holy One.[95]

"Come and see: Of arousal below—when Israel aroused toward the blessed Holy One, crying out before Him—what is written? ואזכור (*Va-ezkor*), *I have remembered, My covenant* (Exodus 6:5)—for in covenant is זכור (*zakhor*), remembering. Then, desire for all to join in a single bond. As soon as this

covenant arouses, joining of all arouses. *I have remembered My covenant*—coupling it with its place. So, *Therefore say to the Children of Israel: 'I am YHVH'* (ibid., 6)."[96]

YHVH spoke to Moses and to Aaron, and He charged them regarding the Children of Israel and regarding Pharaoh king of Egypt (Exodus 6:13).[97]

Rabbi Yose said, "*Regarding the Children of Israel*—to lead them gently, fittingly. [26b] *And regarding Pharaoh*—to treat him respectfully, as has been established."[98]

Rabbi Yeisa said, "Why does Scripture adjoin here *These are the heads of their fathers' houses* (Exodus 6:14)? Because the blessed Holy One said to them, 'Lead the Children of Israel gently, for even though they suffer harsh servitude, they are kings, children of kings. *These are the heads of their fathers' houses*—these whom you see are heads of fathers' houses!'"[99]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "Because none of them renounced their customs or mingled with another nation. These are those who stood their holy ground and did not break faith by intermingling with the Egyptians."[100]

Rabbi Aḥa said, "In order to include Moses and Aaron, who were worthy of bringing out Israel and speaking to Pharaoh and chastising him with a rod; for among all the heads of Israel, none like them was found.[101]

"Come and see: *Eleazar son of Aaron took himself one of the daughters of Putiel as a wife, and she bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the fathers of the Levites* (Exodus 6:25). Now, *these are the heads*? He alone was! However, since Phinehas saved many thousands and myriads of Israelites, and saved heads of the fathers of the Levites, for him the word is unspecified.[102]

"Further, *She bore him Phinehas. These are the heads*—loss of the heads of the Levites was found in him. Whereas

they diminished and were burned, he fulfilled, gaining their priesthood. Both of their potfuls were contained within him; loss of the heads of the Levites was found in him. Who are they? Nadab and Abihu. They separated the sign of covenant from its place, and he came and united them; therefore the inheritance of both of them was given to him. Here is mentioned what would happen later.[103]

"Now, you might ask, 'Why is Phinehas mentioned here?' Well, when the blessed Holy One said *I have remembered My covenant* (Exodus 6:5), He saw Aaron—that Aaron's two sons would one day impair this covenant—and now that He was sending him to Egypt, He wanted to remove him. But as soon as He foresaw Phinehas arising—sustaining this covenant in its place, rectifying their crookedness—immediately, *It is the same Aaron and Moses* (Exodus 6:26). The blessed Holy One said, 'Now *it is the same Aaron* as before.'[104]

"It is the same Aaron and Moses to whom YHVH said, 'Bring out the Children of Israel…' (Exodus 6:26). *It is the same Aaron and Moses*—the verse should read *They are the same Aaron and Moses*. However, to blend one with the other, air with water. *It is the same Moses and Aaron* (ibid., 27)—to blend water with air. Therefore it is written *it is*, not *they* are."[105]

Rabbi El'azar and Rabbi Abba were together one night, having risen in their inn to engage in Torah.[106] Rabbi El'azar opened, saying, "*Know today and take to your heart that YHVH is Elohim* (Deuteronomy 4:39). This verse should read as follows: *Know today that YHVH is Elohim and take it to heart*. But happy is one who engages sedulously in Torah![107]

"Come and see: *Take to* לבבך (*levavekha*), *your heart*—the verse should read לבך (*libbekha*). However, Moses said, 'If you wish to understand this and to know *that YHVH is Elohim, take to levavekha, your heart*, and then you will know. *Levavekha*—

good impulse and evil impulse, interwoven, one. Therefore, *Take to levavekha, your heart*, to know the matter."[108]

Rabbi El'azar said further, "The wicked cause a defect above. What defect? That left is not integrated within right, for evil impulse is not integrated in good impulse because of the sins of humanity.[109]

"They actually cause a defect only to themselves, as is written: *Ruined Him—no; His children, their defect* (Deuteronomy 32:5). As it were, they cause and do not cause. They cause—for blessings from above do not flow upon them, as is said: *He will shut the heavens and there will be no rain* (ibid. 11:17). They do not cause—for *the heavens* absorb for themselves whatever blessings they need, though not receiving to convey below. Surely, it is *their defect*—of the wicked![110]

"Further, לוֹ (*lo*), *Him*—with a ו (*vav*), for right is not combined with left, because of which blessings are not drawn to those below. לֹא (*Lo*), *No*—with an א (*alef*), for they do not receive to convey below. Who causes this? The wicked, separating evil impulse from good impulse and clinging to evil impulse.[111]

"Come and see: Judah comes [27a] from the left side and clings to the right, in order to conquer nations and shatter their power; for if he did not cling to the right, he could not shatter their power.[112] Now, you might ask, 'Why to the right, when it is left that arouses judgments in the world?' Well, this is a mystery: When the blessed Holy One judges Israel, He judges them only from the left, in order to thrust them away with the left and draw them near with the right. But as for other nations, He thrusts them away with the right and draws them near with the left. Your mnemonic is 'convert of righteousness.' Thrusts them away with the right—as is written: *Your right hand, O YHVH, glorious in power. Your right hand, O YHVH, smashes the enemy* (Exodus 15:6). Draws them near with the left, as we have said.[113]

“Therefore Judah, who is from the side of the left, clung to the right, and his journeying was on the right.[114] Those accompanying him all converged on the right: Issachar, who toils in Torah, which is right, as is written: *From His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2). Zebulun, who supports Torah on the right, as is said: *the thigh of the right* (Leviticus 7:32). Thus, Judah was linked to this side and that: north with water, left with right.[115]

“Reuben, who sinned against his father, began on the right and was linked to the left, clinging there.[116] Consequently, those accompanying him are of the left: Simeon, who is left, from the side of the ox, as is written: *and the face of an ox on the left* (Ezekiel 1:10). Gad, left thigh, as is written: *Gad will be raided by raiders, yet he will raid their heel* (Genesis 49:19). Here south clings to fire, right to left.[117]

“Therefore, what we have said: *take to levavekha, your heart*—blending them as one, left with right. Then you will know *that YHVH is Elohim*.”[118]

Rabbi Abba said, “Certainly so! Now it is known: *It is the same Aaron and Moses; it is the same Moses and Aaron* (Exodus 6:26–27)—air with water, water with air, becoming one. Therefore it is written *it is*.”[119]

Rabbi Abba opened, saying, “*You shall love YHVH your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might* (Deuteronomy 6:5). Similarly here, holy unification is intimated—an admonition that one should unite the Holy Name fittingly with supernal love. *With all* לבבך (*levavekha*), *your heart*—right and left, called good impulse and evil impulse. *With all your soul*—soul of David, placed between them. *And with all* מאדך (*me’odekha*), *your excess*—enveloping them above in a place that is boundless. Here is complete unification, loving the blessed Holy One fittingly.[120]

“Further, *And with all your might*—Jacob, who embraces all sides. All is consummate union, fittingly.

Therefore, *It is the same Aaron and Moses; it is the same Moses and Aaron*—all is one, inseparable."[121]

When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, [*"Perform a wonder," then say to Aaron, "Take your staff and fling it down before Pharaoh—it will become a serpent"*] (Exodus 7:9).[122]

Rabbi Yehudah opened, *"How I love Your Torah! All day long it is my meditation* (Psalms 119:97). Come and see: David was king of Israel and he had to judge the people, guiding Israel as a shepherd guiding his flock. Of the night is written *At midnight I rise to praise You for Your righteous judgments* (ibid., 62). He engaged in Torah and praises of the blessed Holy One until morning came; he awakened morning, as is written: *Awake, my soul! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken dawn* (ibid. 57:9).[123]

"When day arrived, he uttered this verse: *How I love Your Torah! All day long it is my meditation*. What does this mean: *All day long it is my meditation*? Well, from here we learn: Whoever strives to clarify the law thoroughly is considered as if he fulfilled the entire Torah. Therefore, *all day long it is my meditation*.[124]

"Come and see: By day, he engaged in Torah to administer justice; by night, he engaged in song and praise until day arrived. Why? All day he occupied himself in administering justice in order to combine left with right. At night, in order to combine rung of night with day.[125]

"Come and see: In the days of King David, he brought all those beasts of the field to the sea.[126] As soon as Solomon appeared, the sea heaved, filled, and watered them. Which of them were watered first? This has been established: these huge supernal sea serpents, of whom is written *and fill the water in the seas* (Genesis 1:22)."[127]

Rabbi [27b] El'azar said, "On the supernal right side gush thirteen springs, deep rivers—some ascending, some

descending, each flowing into its fellow. One extends its head, inserting it into two bodies. One body of a river draws water above, branching below—a thousand streams issuing to four sides. From those thirteen rivers, springs, branch thirteen streams, entering and gathering water—four hundred and ninety-nine and a half streams on this side, four hundred and ninety-nine and a half on that side, the left. A half remains here, and a half there, becoming one. This enters those streams and becomes an evil serpent—red as a rose, his scales hard as iron, his fins swimming and spreading through all those streams.[128]

"When he raises his tail, he strikes and beats other fish—no one can withstand him. His mouth flashes. As he moves through all those streams, other serpents tremble and flee, entering the sea. Once every seventy years he sprawls on this side, and once every seventy years he sprawls on that side; a thousand streams less one are filled by him. This sea serpent sprawls amidst those streams.[129]

"When he moves, a streak of fire darts among the scales—they all rise erect in rage.[130] Those streams intermingle into a color of blue-black, waves surging in four directions of the world.[131] He raises his tail erect, lowers his head, and lashes in thirteen directions, striking above, striking below. All flee before him; until finally, in the north a single flame of fire rises and a herald cries, 'Stand up, hags! Scatter to four corners! Look, there arouses one who puts a muzzle on the face of the sea serpent'—as is said: *I will put hooks in your jaws…* (Ezekiel 29:4)! Then all of them scatter, and the sea serpent is seized and his face pierced through his jaws, and he is cast into the chasm of the great abyss until his power is broken. Then he is returned to his rivers.[132]

"Once every seventy years this is done to him, so that domains of the heavens and their pedestals will not be obliterated. For this, all praise and bless, saying, *Come, let*

us bow down and kneel, bend the knee before YHVH our maker (Psalms 95:6).[133]

"Supernal sea serpents abide above—those who are blessed, as is said: *God blessed them*… (Genesis 1:22). These rule over all fish of the sea, as is written: *Fill the water in the seas* (ibid.). Of this is written *How abundant are Your works, O YHVH! In wisdom You have made them all;* [*the earth is full of Your creatures*] (Psalms 104:24).[134]

[28a][135] "*Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff'* (Exodus 7:9).[136] Why Aaron and not Moses? Because Moses' [staff] was holier, having been engraved with the Holy Name in the supernal Garden, and the blessed Holy One did not want to defile it with those staffs of the sorcerers.[137] Furthermore, to subdue all those coming from the left, since Aaron comes from the right, and left is subdued by right.[138]

"Now, it was revealed before the blessed Holy One that those sorcerers would produce serpents; so what mightiness was there in producing a serpent before Pharaoh? Well, because punishment begins there, and from the origin of the serpent began his dominion. So, all the sorcerers rejoiced, for such was the beginning of their wisdom. Immediately Aaron's serpent turned back into dry wood and swallowed them. At this they were astonished and realized that a superior power existed on earth; for they had thought that beneath them existed no power to perform anything, and then *Aaron's staff swallowed their staffs* (Exodus 7:12)—*Aaron's staff*, precisely, turning back into wood and swallowing them![139]

"Thus Aaron performed two signs, one above and one below. One above: supernal serpent, dominating theirs. One below, for wood dominated their serpents. Pharaoh was wiser than all his sorcerers and he perceived that a superior power ruled over earth, prevailing above, prevailing below."[140]

Rabbi Abba said, “Now, you might say that everything sorcerers do is only by illusion—appearing so but nothing more. Therefore Scripture informs us: *they became*—precisely, as is written: *They became serpents* (Exodus 7:12).”[141]

Rabbi Yose said, “Even their own serpents turned back into wood, and Aaron’s wood swallowed them.[142]

“It is written: *I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great sea serpent sprawling amidst his streams* (Ezekiel 29:3). From there originates their power below, but their wisdom lies below all those rungs.[143] Come and see: Their wisdom is on the lowest rungs, subjugating these rungs to higher rungs. The heads of their dominion and their essence are beneath that serpent, and they are linked with the serpent, because from there their highest rung draws power—as implied by what is written: *behind the millstones* (Exodus 11:5).”[144]

Rabbi Ḥiyya was sitting one day by the gateway of the gate of Usha.[145] He saw Rabbi El’azar, with a passerine flying by him.[146] He said to Rabbi El’azar, “This indicates that even when you are on the road everyone yearns to follow you.”

He turned his head and saw it. He said, “Surely, it has a mission, for the blessed Holy One accomplishes His mission through everything. He has so many messengers! Do not say, Only animate things’; rather, even inanimate.”[147]

He opened, saying, “*For a stone will cry out from the wall, and a rafter will respond from the woodwork* (Habakkuk 2:11). How vigilant a person should be not to sin before the blessed Holy One! If he says, ‘Who will testify against me?’—look, the stones of his house and the woodwork will testify! Sometimes the blessed Holy One accomplishes a mission through them.[148]

“Come and see: With a staff of dry wood the blessed Holy One performed the first of the miracles, accomplishing

thereby two missions. One, it was a dry piece of wood; and temporarily it was animated, becoming a creature."[149]

Rabbi El'azar said, "May the breath expire [28b] from those who say that the blessed Holy One will not revive the dead, and 'How can they be transformed into a new creature?'[150] Let them come and see—those wicked fools, far from Torah, far from Him! In Aaron's hand was a staff of dry wood, and the blessed Holy One temporarily turned it into a creature with spirit and body; now, those bodies that had holy spirits and souls, observed the commandments of Torah, engaged in Torah day and night, and were concealed by the blessed Holy One in the dust—later, when He joyously renews the world, how much more so will He transform them into new creatures!"[151]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said to him, "What is more, that very body that existed will rise, as implied by what is written: *Your dead will live!* (Isaiah 26:19)—and not *He will create*—implying that they already are creatures but they *will live*.[152] For one bone remains from the body beneath the earth, and that one never decays or wastes away in the dust. At that time, the blessed Holy One will soften it and make it like leavened dough—rising, expanding in four directions, thereby forming the body and all its smooth members. Afterward, the blessed Holy One will infuse spirit into them."[153]

Rabbi El'azar said, "So it is. Come and see: How is that bone softened? By dew, as is written: *For Your dew is a dew of lights…* (Isaiah 26:19)."[154]

Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their channels, and over their ponds, and over all the gatherings of their waters, that they become blood. There will be blood in all the land of Egypt, and in the trees and in the stones (Exodus 7:19).[155] Rabbi Yehudah said, "This verse is difficult, for how could he go to all those places? Furthermore, look at what is written:

Seven full days passed after YHVH struck the Nile (ibid., 25)—and yet it is said *over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their channels*…! However, the waters of Egypt were the Nile—from there were filled all those other ponds, channels, springs, and all their waters. So Aaron stretched to strike only the Nile. Come and see that it is so, for it is written: *The Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile* (ibid., 21)."[156]

Rabbi Abba said, "Come and see: Lower waters diverge in many supernal directions. For upper waters gather in a gathering of water, as is written: *Let the waters under heaven be gathered to one place* (Genesis 1:9), and similarly: *The gathering of waters He called Seas* (ibid., 10). This verse has already been established.[157] Come and see: That expanse containing sun, moon, stars, and constellations is the gathering house of water, for it receives all water and waters the earth, who is the lower world. Once She receives water, She scatters and distributes it to every side; from there all is watered.[158]

"When Judgment looms, the lower world does not suckle from that expanse, but suckles from the left side and is then called *sword of YHVH, full of blood* (Isaiah 34:6). Woe to those who suckle from Her and are watered then! At that time the sea divides in two: white and red; then it casts into the Nile the portion of Egypt, and strikes above and strikes below. Therefore Israel drank water, and the Egyptians blood.[159]

"Now, you might say, 'It was to be repulsive, nothing more.' Come and see: They drank blood, which entered their intestines, rose, and broke through—until Israel sold them water, which they drank. Therefore, the first to strike them was blood."[160]

Rabbi Yitsḥak opened, "*I will exalt You, my God the King, and I will bless Your name forever and ever* (Psalms 145:1). Come and see: Corresponding to his rung, David said *my*

God the King—mine. For he wanted to exalt it, conducting it into supernal light, to blend with one another, all becoming one. Therefore, *I will exalt You, my God the King, and I will bless Your name forever and ever*. For we have learned: All his days, David strove to array the throne and illumine Her face, so that He would protect Her and lower light would be bathed [29a] in upper light, all becoming one. When Solomon appeared, he found the world complete and the moon full, and he did not have to make an effort to illumine Her.[161]

"Come and see: When the blessed Holy One wishes to wreak vengeance upon other nations, the left arouses and the moon is filled from that side. Then blood flows from springs and streams below, all those of the left side; thus their punishment is blood.[162]

"Come and see: When blood arouses upon a nation, that blood is blood of killing, for another nation is provoked against them and kills them. But now in Egypt, the blessed Holy One did not want to bring upon them another nation, arousing blood upon them, so that Israel, who was dwelling among them in their land, would not suffer. Rather, He smote them with blood in their rivers, so that they could not drink—and because their dominion prevailed at first on that side. The blessed Holy One punished their dominion first, so that their deity would be struck, for the Nile was one of their false gods. Similarly, their other deities were gushing blood, as is written: *There will be blood in all the land of Egypt, and in the wood and in the stones* (Exodus 7:19)."[163]

Rabbi Ḥiyya rose one night to study Torah, and with him was Rabbi Zuta, who was still a child.[164] Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, saying, "*Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart; for God has already taken pleasure in your deeds* (Ecclesiastes 9:7). What prompted Solomon to utter this verse? Well, all of Solomon's words were spoken in wisdom, and as for his saying *Go, eat your*

bread with joy—when a person walks in the ways of the blessed Holy One, He draws him near and grants him tranquility and rest. Come and see: He eats and drinks bread and wine with a joyful heart because the blessed Holy One is pleased with his deeds."[165]

The child said to him, "If so—you said that Solomon's words were spoken in wisdom; where is the wisdom here?"[166]

He replied, "My son, cook your dish and you will discover this verse."[167]

He said, "I haven't cooked yet, but I know!"

He asked him, "How do you know?"

He replied, "I heard a voice from my father, who uttered this verse. Solomon is alerting a person to crown Assembly of Israel *with joy*, which is the right side—bread crowned with joy. Then, to be crowned with wine, which is the left, so that total joy will appear in complete faith, right and left. When She is between both of them, all blessings dwell in the world. All this when the blessed Holy One is pleased with the deeds of human beings, as is written: *for God has already taken pleasure in your deeds*."[168]

Rabbi Ḥiyya came and kissed him. He said, "By your life, my son! I left this word for your sake. Now I know that the blessed Holy One desires to crown you with Torah."[169]

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened again, saying, *"Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt'* (Exodus 7:19). Why Aaron and not Moses? Because the blessed Holy One said, 'Waters exist in Aaron's site, and left must draw waters from there. Aaron, who comes from that side, will stimulate them, and when left gathers them, they will turn into blood.[170]

"Come and see: Lowest of all rungs was struck first."[171]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "From the lowest the blessed Holy One began, and His hand struck with every single finger. When He reached the highest of all rungs, He played His part, passing through the land and killing all. Thus He killed

all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, since that is the firstborn rung of all.[172]

"Come and see: Pharaoh's dominion was by water, as is written: *the great sea serpent sprawling amidst his streams* (Ezekiel 29:3). Therefore his river was turned into blood.[173] Afterward, frogs wielding eerie voices, croaking within their intestines—emerging from the Nile, climbing onto dry land, raising shrieks in every direction, until they fell dead in their houses.[174]

"Mystery of all: All those ten signs performed by the blessed Holy One all issued from the mighty hand. That hand was raised over all rungs [29b] of their dominion in order to muddle their minds, so they did not know what to do. Come and see: As soon as any of their rungs emerged to accomplish something visible to all, they were unable to do anything. When was this? When the mighty hand loomed over them."

It is written: *The Nile will swarm frogs and they will come up and come into your house, into your bedroom…* (Exodus 7:28).[175]

Rabbi Shim'on opened, saying, *"A voice is heard on a height—wailing, bitter weeping—Rachel weeping for her children…* (Jeremiah 31:15).[176] Come and see: This verse has been established in numerous places, yet this verse is difficult.[177] *Rachel weeping for her children*—Rachel's children were Joseph and Benjamin, no others; whereas Leah, all those six tribes were hers. Why, then, did Rachel weep and not Leah?[178] They have said as follows: *Leah's eyes were weak* (Genesis 29:17). Why *weak*? Because she stood at the crossroads and inquired about Esau, and she was told about the actions of that wicked one, and she feared that she would fall into his share, so she wept every day until her eyes weakened. The blessed Holy One said, 'You wept for the sake of that righteous one, so that you wouldn't be in the share of that wicked one. By your life,

your sister will stand in the crossroads and weep over the exile of Israel, while you will stand inside and not weep over them!' So Rachel weeps over the exile of Israel.[179]

"This verse, however, refers to what we have said. Mystery of Rachel and Leah: They are two worlds—one a concealed world, one a revealed world. So this one was buried and covered within, in the cave, and concealed; while that one stands at the crossroads, revealed. All corresponding to the supernal pattern. Therefore, Jacob did not bring her into the cave or into anywhere else, for look at what is written: *with still a stretch of land to reach Ephrath* (Genesis 48:7)—he did not bring her into the city because he knew that her place was in the open![180]

"Come and see: Assembly of Israel is called Rachel, as is said: וכרחל (*ukhraḥel*), *and as a sheep, silent before her shearers* (Isaiah 53:7). Why *silent*? Because when other nations rule, the voice is cut off from Her and She is silenced. This corresponds to what is written: *A voice is heard on a height*—Jerusalem above.[181]

"*Rachel weeping for her children*—as long as Israel are in exile, She weeps for them, for She is their mother.

"*Refusing to be comforted for her children, because* איננו (*einennu*), *they are no more* (Jeremiah 31:15). Why *because einennu, he is no more*? The verse should read *because* אינם (*einam*), *they are no more*. However, because Her husband has withdrawn from Her and is not joined with Her.[182]

"Come and see: Not just once did She weep over Israel, but every single time that they are in exile. Therefore, the blessed Holy One inflicted upon the Egyptians what is written: *There will be a great cry in all the land of Egypt…* (Exodus 11:6).[183] And He prepared other voices for them—namely, the frogs, who raised shrieks in their intestines, and they fell dead in the streets.[184]

"There was one, and she bred and the land was filled with them.[185] They all surrendered themselves to the fire, as is written: *into your ovens and into your kneading bowls*

(Exodus 7:28). What did they say? *We entered fire and water, and You brought us out to abundance* (Psalms 66:12).[186]

"Now, you might say, 'If so, why did the Egyptians care if all those frogs went into the fire?' Well, they all entered the fire, went into the oven, and did not die! Those that did die, what did they do? There was bread in the oven, and they went into the bread and burst, and others issued from them who were absorbed by the bread. When they came to eat some of it, that bread turned back into frogs in their intestines—leaping and shrieking until they died. For them this was the hardest of all.[187]

"Come and see: *The Nile will swarm frogs and they will come up and come into your house, into your bedroom, onto your bed* (Exodus 7:28). Pharaoh was punished first of all. May the name of God be blessed forever and ever, for He requites the deeds of human beings, whatever they do.[188] It is written: *Pharaoh's courtiers saw her and praised her to Pharaoh, and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house* (Genesis 12:15). This verse comes in order to be expounded. Three Pharaohs [30a] here: one at that time, one in the days of Joseph, and one in the days of Moses, who was struck by his blows.[189]

"This verse is completely established in regard to the first Pharaoh. However, when Sarah was taken to him, he gestured to his artisans and they painted her image in his chamber, on the wall above his bed. His mind was not soothed until they made a sawn image, and when he climbed into bed he brought it with him. Every king who succeeded him would see that painted picture of an image; jesters would come before him as he climbed into bed and he would enjoy that picture. Therefore, the king was punished here more than all of them. Come and see how this corresponds to what is written: *into your bedroom, onto your bed*, and afterward: *into your servants' houses, upon your people* (Exodus 7:28). Regarding all of them, it is

not written *onto their beds, into their bedrooms*—just for him alone."[190]

Rabbi Abba opened, "*All the streams flow to the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place the streams flow, there they continue to flow* (Ecclesiastes 1:7). This verse has been discussed, and explained by the Companions.[191] But come and see: When those supernal streams enter the sea, it gathers them, absorbing them, because the waters freeze in the sea and that congealing absorbs all the water entering. Afterward, water issues through the power of the south, watering all beasts of the field, as is said: *They water all beasts of the field* (Psalms 104:11).

"Come and see: The frozen sea is melted by the power of the south, as has been said, drawing in all water. Therefore, it *is not full*. The Companions have already been aroused by this.[192]

"*To the place the streams flow, there they continue to flow*. Why *they continue*? Because that river issuing from Eden never ceases, gushing water into the sea; so *they continue to flow*—flowing again and again ceaselessly. As it continues *to flow*, in order to water all, a north wind comes, freezing the waters; and a south wind, which is warm, thaws them to flow in every direction. So this sea dwells between these two sides, sustained by them, with ships sailing in every direction.[193]

"Come and see: When the King comes to His bed at the moment when night is split, a north wind rouses, arousing love toward *Matronita*. If not for arousal of the north, the King would not unite with Her, since north initiates love, as is said: *His left hand beneath my head*, and south embraces passionately, as is written: *his right hand embracing me* (Song of Songs 2:6). Then many jesters arouse song until morning comes, as is written: *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of Elohim shouted for joy* (Job 38:7). When morning comes, all those above and below utter

songs. And Israel correspondingly below, as is written: *O you who praise YHVH, do not be silent!* (Isaiah 62:6). *Do not be silent*—in the night. At midnight, those who desire to constantly praise the blessed Holy One do not let their hearts subside but rise to praise Him. As morning rises, they hasten to the synagogue and glorify the blessed Holy One. And similarly after midday, and again at night—when it darkens, night clinging to darkness, and the sun beds down. Of these is written *O you who praise YHVH, do not be silent!* This is the holy People of Israel.[194]

"Therefore, the blessed Holy One remembered them in Egypt and brought upon Pharaoh those who do not subside day or night. Who are they? The frogs, whose voices never subside, for he seized the holy people who do not subside day or night from praising the blessed Holy One. No one in Egypt could speak with another. By them the land was devastated; from their noise, babies and children died.[195]

"Now, you might say, 'Why weren't they able to kill them?' Well, a person would lift up a stick or a stone to kill one, and it would burst—six issuing from its belly, running and decimating the land, until they refrained from approaching them.[196]

"Come and see how many rivers and streams issue from the supernal sea when waters thaw! Numerous rivers divide [30b] in various directions—countless branches, countless streams. The portion of the prince appointed over Egypt is swarming waters. For no waters issuing from the sea fail to breed fish according to their species. Who are the fish? Messengers to the worlds, appointed to carry out the will of their Master, empowered by the spirit of wisdom. Of this we have learned: There are waters breeding the wise, and there are waters breeding fools, according to those rivers branching in all directions.[197]

"The river of Egypt breeds masters of sorcery—small-mouthed fish, bound in ten sorcerous rungs, as is written: *diviner of divinations, soothsayer, augur, sorcerer, one who*

casts a spell, or consults a ghost or familiar spirit, or inquires of the dead (Deuteronomy 18:10–11). Look, ten species of the wisdom of sorcerers![198]

At that time, the blessed Holy One extended His finger, muddling those streams and rivers of Egypt, and their fish of wisdom were impeded. First, because it turned into blood; second, because the fish raised their voices pointlessly, and no spirit of that wisdom came upon them.[199]

"ערוב (*Arov*), *Mixture*—similarly, for He confounded their species of wisdom, so they could not grasp. Moreover, those found on land were devastating the land and corrupting their ways. *Arov*. What is *arov*? ערבוביא (*Irbuvya*), confusion, as is said: *a garment of different kinds* (Leviticus 19:19)—ערובין (*eruvin*), mixtures. *Your field you shall not sow with different kinds* (ibid.)—many species cast by the hand.[200]

"Come and see how many powers were mingled above as one! The blessed Holy One confounded them together in order to confuse their potent force above. All those mighty deeds performed by the blessed Holy One in Egypt were done with one hand, for He raised His hand over them above and below. Thereby the wisdom of Egypt vanished, as is written: *The wisdom of its wise will perish…* (Isaiah 29:14).[201]

"Come and see what is written: *I will incite Egypt against Egypt* (Isaiah 19:2)—above and below, *Egypt* above *against Egypt* below. For those powers are appointed above over powers below, and all were intermingled—intermingled above, so that the Egyptians could not connect by their sorcery with those places they connected with before, because they were confounded. That is why He brought upon them *arov*, mixture—beasts mixed together.[202]

"Lice raised by the dust of the earth. Come and see: All vegetation engendered on earth derives from a power above sown within it, all corresponding to the supernal pattern.[203]

“Come and see: The blessed Holy One fashioned seven heavens, and similarly seven earths—zones diverging in their locations. Seven heavens above, seven zones of earth above. Correspondingly below, rungs diverge: seven heavens and seven zones of earth. The Companions have established the seven earths as strata, one upon another.[204]

“Those seven zones of earth above each divide into ten aspects, appointed over seventy princes, appointed over seventy nations. The land zone of each and every nation surrounds the Holy Land of Israel, as is said: *Here, the bed of Solomon! Sixty warriors surrounding her* (Song of Songs 3:7), and ten concealed among them, constituting seventy surrounding the Holy Land. This is above; correspondingly, below.[205]

“Come and see the land zone allotted to Egypt! At that time the blessed Holy One extended His finger and glowing marshals issued in that zone, drying up all softness moistened by water and all vegetation fed by flowing water. Then below appeared lice from the dust of the earth.[206]

“Yet it has been said that Aaron struck! However, this is why Aaron struck: to show that the right hand of the blessed Holy One shatters enemies, as is said: *Your right hand, O YHVH, smashes the enemy* (Exodus 15:6).[207] One day the blessed Holy One will bring the same upon wicked Rome, as is written: *Her streams will be turned into pitch and her dust into sulfur…* (Isaiah 34:9). Thus, *all the dust of the earth became lice in all the land of Egypt* (Exodus 8:13).”[208]

Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Ḥiyya were walking on the way. Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “When Companions are walking on the way, [31a] they have to go with one heart. And if they encounter, or find themselves walking among, sinners of the world or people not of the King’s palace, they must separate from them. How do we know this? From Caleb, for it is written: *But My servant Caleb, because a different*

spirit was with him and he followed Me fully (Numbers 14:24). What does this mean: *a different spirit*? That he separated from those spies."[209]

He opened, saying, "*They went up through the Negeb and he came as far as Hebron* (Numbers 13:22). Why *he came as far as Hebron*? Because he parted from those spies and came alone to Hebron to prostrate himself on the graves of the patriarchs.[210]

"Hebron was given to him as a share and inheritance to hold, as is said: *To him I will give the land on which he has tread, and to his children* (Deuteronomy 1:36). Why did He grant him Hebron? If it was because he prostrated himself on the graves of the patriarchs to be saved from that plan—enough for him that he was saved! Rather, I have heard the mystery of the matter.[211]

"Similarly it is written: *David inquired of YHVH, 'Should I go up into one of the towns of Judah?' YHVH said, 'Go up!' He asked, 'Where should I go?' He said, 'To Hebron'* (2 Samuel 2:1). Here one should contemplate! Since Saul had already died and David had been anointed in the days of Saul to receive kingship, once Saul died why wasn't David enthroned, receiving kingship over all Israel—rather than coming to Hebron and receiving kingship over it alone for seven years, tarrying there all those seven years, and only after Ish-bosheth died, receiving kingship over all Israel in Jerusalem? Well, it is all a mystery before the blessed Holy One.[212]

"Come and see: Holy Kingdom did not receive full kingship until it joined the patriarchs; upon joining them, it was formed into a complete structure by the upper world. The upper world is called *seven years*, since all of them are within it. Your mnemonic is: *He built it seven years* (1 Kings 6:38)—upper world—and it is not written *in seven*. As is said: *Six days YHVH made, heaven and earth* (Exodus 20:11).[213] Who is *six days*? Abraham, as is written: *These are the generations of heaven and earth* בהבראם (*be-*

hibbare'am), *when they were created* (Genesis 2:4)—באברהם (*be-Avraham*), through Abraham. Abraham is called *six days*, and because he is *six days*, the world was created. Similarly, *He built it seven years*.[214]

"Come and see: David wished to be composed of complete kingship below, and he was not composed until he came and joined the patriarchs. He remained there seven years, to be composed among them. After seven years he was composed completely, his kingdom extended, never to be removed. If he had not stationed himself in Hebron, joining his place, the kingdom would not have been built, extending fittingly.[215]

"Similarly, Caleb was illumined by the spirit of wisdom and came to Hebron to join the patriarchs, going to his place. Afterward it became his place, inherited by him."[216]

Rabbi Yeisa and Rabbi Ḥizkiyah were walking from Cappadocia to Lydda,[217] accompanied by a certain Jew lugging a skin of wine.[218] As they were walking, Rabbi Yeisa said to Rabbi Ḥizkiyah, "Open your mouth and utter one of those sublime words of Torah that you speak daily before the Holy Lamp!"[219]

He opened, saying, "*Her ways are ways of delightfulness, and all her paths are peace* (Proverbs 3:17). *Her ways are ways of delightfulness*—ways of Torah, for whoever follows the ways of Torah is showered by the blessed Holy One with the delight of *Shekhinah*, never departing from him. *And all her paths are peace*—for all paths of Torah are entirely peaceful, providing him peace above, peace below, peace in this world, peace in the world that is coming."

The Jew said, "A coin in a flask is found in this verse!"[220]

They said to him, "How do you know?"

He replied, "I heard from my father, and I learned something here in this verse."

He opened, saying, “This verse is twofold and double-faceted: call them *ways* and call them *paths*, call it *delightfulness* and call it *peace*. Who are *ways* and who are *paths*? Who is *delightfulness* and who is *peace*? Well, *Her ways are ways of delightfulness* corresponds to what is written: *Who makes a way through the sea* (Isaiah 43:16).[221] For look, every place called *way* in the Torah is a way open to all, like a road open to every person! So, *her ways*—ways opened by the patriarchs, who dug in the Great Sea [31b] and entered Her; those ways open up on every side, in every direction of the world.[222]

“This *delightfulness* is the delight issuing from the world that is coming, and from the world that is coming all lamps radiate, lights scattering everywhere. That goodness and radiance of the world that is coming, absorbed by the patriarchs, is called *delightfulness*.[223]

“Alternatively, the world that is coming is called *delightfulness*, and as it arouses, all goodness and joy, all radiance, all freedom of the world arouse. Therefore it is called *delightfulness*.[224] So we have learned: When Sabbath enters, the wicked in Hell all rest, experiencing freedom and tranquility. When Sabbath departs, we should arouse supernal joy upon us so that we may be saved from the punishment of the wicked, who are doomed from that moment on. We should arouse and recite: *May the delightfulness of YHVH our God be upon us* (Psalms 90:17)—supernal delightfulness, joy of all! So, *Her ways are ways of delightfulness*.[225]

“*And all her paths are peace*. Who are *her paths*? Those paths emerging from above, all gathered by a single covenant named *peace*, peace of the home, who conducts them into the Great Sea when it is agitated, bringing it peace, as is written: *and all her paths are peace*.”[226]

Rabbi Yeisa and Rabbi Ḥizkiyah came and kissed him. They said, “All these sublime words concealed within you, and we did not know!”

They walked on. When they reached a certain field, they saw animals of the field dying. They said, “There is surely an animal pestilence here!”

That Jew said, “Concerning what you have said, that in Egypt the blessed Holy One killed all those sheep and all those animals: there were three fatal plagues among the animals. One, pestilence; another, those killed by hail; another, those firstborn of the animals.[227] Now, how did they die? Well, see what is written at first: *Look, the hand of YHVH is about to be against your livestock in the field…* (Exodus 9:3). Why concerning none of the others is it written *the hand of YHVH*? Because here *the hand of YHVH*—a hand of five fingers. For previously it is written: *It is the finger of God!* (ibid. 8:15), while here all five fingers. Each and every finger killed one species, and there were five species, as is written: *against the horses, against the donkeys, against the camels, against the cattle, and against the sheep* (ibid. 9:3)—five species for five fingers called *hand*; therefore, *the hand of YHVH. A very severe pestilence* —for they died on their own and were found dead.[228]

“After the Egyptians failed to return [in repentance], those very letters reversed themselves, killing all those that remained: דבר (*dever*), pestilence, turned into ברד (*barad*), hail. What is the difference between them? This one comes gently; that one, with intense fury. Both of these were in one place, in five fingers.

“Come and see: דבר (*Dever*), pestilence—letters appearing gently; a peaceful death, for they died on their own. ברד (*Barad*), hail—letters reversing with intense fury, killing all.”[229]

They sat in that field. They saw sheep coming to a certain spot and dying there. That Jew rose toward that place and saw two waterskins filled with slag.[230]

He opened, saying, “It is written: *I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will make your name great…* (Genesis 12:2). This word is of Rabbi El’azar, who

said, *'I will make of you a great nation*, corresponding to *Go you forth!* (ibid. 12:1). *I will bless you*, corresponding to *from your land* (ibid.). *I will make your name great*, corresponding to *from your birthplace* (ibid.). *You will be a blessing* (ibid., 2), corresponding to *from your father's house* (ibid., 1). Each corresponding to the other.'[231]

"Rabbi Shim'on said, 'Here is a mystery of wisdom! *I will make of you a great nation*, corresponding to the right side. *I will bless you*, corresponding to the left side. *I will make your name great*, corresponding to aspect of the middle. *You will be a blessing*, corresponding to the aspect of the land of Israel. All, mystery of the holy Chariot.'[232]

"Come and see: Through arousal below, there is arousal above. Until there is arousal below, nothing is aroused above to rest upon him.[233] What is written of Abraham? *They set out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans…* (Genesis 11:31). *They set out with them*. The verse should read *they set out with him*, for look at what is written: *Terah took Abram his son…* (ibid.)! Why *they set out with them*? Well, with Abraham and Sarah. For as soon as Abraham was saved from the fire, Terah came around to fulfilling his desire; therefore, [32a] *they set out with them*. Once they aroused first, the blessed Holy One said to them, לך לך (*Lekh lekha*), *Go you forth!* (Genesis 12:1).[234]

"Rabbi Shim'on said, '*Lekh lekha, Go for yourself*, to refine yourself, and to yourself.[235]

"'*From your land* (ibid.)—from the aspect of habitation that you gauge, in which you were born.

"'*From your birthplace* (ibid.)—from your birth.

"'*From your father's house* (ibid.)—examining their root.[236]

"'*To the land that I will show you* (ibid.)—there what you desire will be revealed to you: the power appointed over it, deep and concealed.[237]

"'Immediately, *Abram went…* (ibid., 4).'[238] As for us, we should go from here, to discover a mystery of wisdom."

They rose.[239]

Rabbi Abba opened, saying, "*For then I will purify the language of the peoples, that all of them may call upon the name of YHVH and serve Him shoulder to shoulder* (Zephaniah 3:9). And it is written: *YHVH will be king over all the earth; on that day YHVH will be one and His name One* (Zechariah 14:9)."[240] [32b]

פרשת בא

Parashat Bo

“COME” (EXODUS 10:1–13:16)

Rabbi Yehudah opened, “*Happy is the people who know the shout of joy; O* YHVH*, they walk in the light of Your presence* (Psalms 89:16).[1] How essential for people to walk in the ways of the blessed Holy One and observe the commandments of Torah, so that thereby they may attain the world that is coming and be delivered from all accusations above and below! For just as there are accusers in the world below, so there are accusers above, looming over human beings.[2]

“Those who enact the commandments of Torah and walk a straight path, revering their Lord, how many advocates stand poised above them! As is said: *If he has an angel over him, one advocate among a thousand, to vouch for his uprightness, then He is gracious to him and says, ‘Spare him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom’* (Job 33:23–24). So, happy is one who observes the commandments of Torah.”[3]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “If so, why is an angel required here to be an advocate for that person? Look at what is written: *For* YHVH *will be your confidence; He will keep your foot from the snare* (Proverbs 3:26), and similarly: YHVH *will guard you from all evil* (Psalms 121:7)! For the blessed Holy One sees everything that a person does in this world,

whether good or evil, as is said: *'If one hides in secret places, do I not see him?' declares YHVH* (Jeremiah 23:24)."[4]

Rabbi Yehudah replied, "All is certainly so, but see what is written: *Stretch out Your hand and touch his bone and his flesh….YHVH said to Satan*, [*"Here, he is in your hand, but spare his life"*] (Job 2:5–6), and similarly: *You incited Me against him to destroy him without cause* (ibid., 3)—demonstrating that authorization is granted to the Other Side, authorization over matters of the world being given to one to whom it should not be given. All these ways are concealed before the blessed Holy One, and we must not pursue them, for they are laws of the blessed Holy One and human beings are not permitted to scrutinize them—except for the truly virtuous who know the secrets of Torah and walk in the way of wisdom, discovering those hidden elements of Torah."[5]

Rabbi El'azar opened, *"One day the sons of Elohim came to stand before YHVH, and Satan also came among them* (Job 1:6). *One day*—the day of Rosh Hashanah, when the blessed Holy One stands to judge the world. Similarly, *One day he came there* (2 Kings 4:11)—that day was the holiday of Rosh Hashanah.[6]

"*The sons of Elohim came*—those appointed princes, sent into the world to examine the actions of humanity.

"*To stand* על (*al*), *before, YHVH*—as is said: *I saw YHVH sitting upon His throne, with all the host of heaven standing by Him, on His right and on His left* (1 Kings 22:19).[7] However, *to stand before YHVH*—in this verse I have discovered the love of the blessed Holy One for Israel. For these messengers—commissioned to examine the deeds of humanity—go roaming and snatch all those deeds, and on the day that Judgment rises to judge the world, they become accusers, standing over human beings.

"Come and see: Of all nations of the world, they stand to examine only the actions of Israel, because they are

children of the blessed Holy One. When the actions of Israel are found to be unseemly, those appointed messengers—seeking to stand over those actions of Israel—stand, as it were, על (*al*), *against, YHVH*, surely! For when the deeds of Israel are improper, they weaken, as it were, the power of the blessed Holy One; when deeds are proper, they provide power and might to the blessed Holy One. Of this is written *Give strength to God* (Psalms 68:35). How? By proper actions. So, on that day all those appointed princes gathered על יהוה (*al YHVH*)—*against YHVH*, surely! For since they gathered against Israel, they gathered against Him.[8]

"*And Satan also came among them* (Job 1:6). *Also*—amplifying them; for they all came to be accusers against Israel, [33a] and this one supplemented them, being the greatest slanderer of them all, the greatest accuser.[9]

"As soon as the blessed Holy One saw that they were all coming to accuse, immediately *YHVH said to Satan, 'From where have you come?'* (Job 1:7). Now, didn't the blessed Holy One know *from where* he came? Rather, to conduct the episode toward His intention.[10]

"*Satan answered YHVH, saying, 'From roaming the land'* (ibid.). From here we learn that the habitation of earth has been handed over to other sides, except for the land of Israel alone. As soon as he said *From roaming the land*, the blessed Holy One perceived that he sought to slander Israel. Immediately, *YHVH said to Satan, 'Have you noticed My servant Job? For there is no one like him in all the earth'* (Job 1:8). He saw the moment to give him a portion with which to be occupied, so that he would separate from Israel. As they have established, this can be compared to a shepherd who wanted to bring his flock across a certain river.... Immediately, Satan occupied himself with him and did not accuse Israel.[11]

"*Satan answered YHVH, saying, 'Is it for nothing that Job reveres God?'* (Job 1:9). 'No wonder that a servant whose

master fulfills his every desire would revere him! Remove Your care from him and see if he reveres You or not!'[12]

"Come and see: In time of distress, when to this side is given a portion with which to be occupied, it then separates entirely. Similarly, the goat of the new moon and the goat on Yom Kippur, so that he will occupy himself with it and leave Israel with their King.[13] And here, the time had come to take this portion from the entire seed of Abraham on the other side, as is said: *Look, Milcah too has borne sons to Nahor your brother: Uz, his firstborn…* (Genesis 22:20–21).[14]

"Come and see: When he said *From roaming the land*, he was asking Him to execute judgment upon Israel. For he had a claim against Abraham to present to the blessed Holy One, because justice had not been rendered to Isaac when he was offered on the altar, since he should not have exchanged in any aspect a sacrifice that he had prepared on the altar for another, as is said: *he shall not exchange it* (Leviticus 27:10). Here Isaac was lying on the altar yet was not consummated as a sacrifice; justice was not rendered to him. This is what he sought from the blessed Holy One, just as he sought retribution for the selling of Joseph over many generations. Whatever he seeks, he seeks through justice.[15]

"From the time when Isaac was saved, and exchanged as a sacrifice, the blessed Holy One prepared this one for the Accuser as his portion from all of Abraham's seed, so that he would not approach another side.[16] He came to Him entirely through justice. For Job was one of Pharaoh's closest advisers, and when Pharaoh arose against Israel, seeking to kill them, he said to him, 'No! Rather, take their possessions and subject their bodies to harsh labor; but don't kill them.' The blessed Holy One said to him, 'By your life! With that very judgment you will be punished!' What is written of him? *But stretch out Your hand and touch his bone and his flesh* (Job 2:5). As he judged, thereby was he

punished—even though in all other ways he revered the blessed Holy One.[17]

"Come and see what is written: *But spare his soul* (Job 2:6)—because of the mystery written: *End of all flesh comes before Me* (Genesis 6:13), as they have established: *comes before Me*, literally! This is *end of all flesh*, not spirit. As has been explained, it is the *end* that comes from the side of darkness, as is said: *He puts an end to darkness; every termination he explores* (Job 28:3)—destroying all flesh. For there is another *end*, called *end of the right* (Daniel 12:13), whereas this one is another *end* from the side of the left, which is *darkness*; so he was empowered over *his bone and his flesh*.[18]

"*You incited Me against him to destroy him without cause* (Job 2:3). If so, it was unjust, and only due to the speech of that Accuser, who incited and misled Him! However, all was just, and Elihu said so to him: *For according to a human's deeds He repays him, and treats him according to his ways* (Job 34:11). So it was, as has been said: Just as he decreed, so it was decreed against him.[19]

"As for what is said, *You incited Me* בו (*bo*), *against him, to destroy him without cause*, it is not written *You incited Me to destroy him*, but rather *You incited Me bo, in him*—in his mind it exists, for he thinks that *you incited Me*, as he said: *Upon the plan of the wicked You beam* (Job 10:3). Job said, 'You were lured by the speech of that Accuser!' Similarly, *They deceived Him* בפיהם (*be-fihem*), *with their mouths; with their tongues they lied to Him* (Psalms 78:36). It is not written *They deceived Him and lied to Him*, but rather *They deceived Him be-fihem, in their mouths*—in their mouths existed the incident of His being deceived."[20] [33b]

Rabbi Abba said, "All is fine, but we have learned as follows: 'He ascends and accuses.' Now, can he really accuse? Yes, for he is *an old and foolish king*, and see what is written: *Better a poor and wise child than an old and*

foolish king (Ecclesiastes 4:13). So, he can accuse a person. Why? Because he is trusted concerning all actions of humanity.[21]

"Come and see: This applies to the judgment of an individual, but concerning the judgment of the world, it is written *YHVH came down to see the city and the tower* (Genesis 11:5); *I will go down and see* (ibid. 18:21). For trust is granted to no one but Himself, since He does not wish to devastate the world based on the word of that Accuser, whose desire is always to destroy. How do we know? As is written: *He puts an end to darkness; every termination he explores* (Job 28:3)—probing to destroy the world. This is *End of all flesh comes before Me* (Genesis 6:13)—literally, in order to destroy.[22]

"Come and see: *One day the sons of Elohim came to stand before YHVH* (Job 1:6), as has been said.[23] On that day two sides stand facing the inhabitants of the world. All those who come before the blessed Holy One with good deeds and repentance are entitled to be inscribed on the one that is life, gushing springs of life. Whoever is from its side is inscribed for life. All those who come with evil deeds are on that other side, which is death—called Death, imbued with death.[24]

"On that day these two sides stand: Life and Death. Some are inscribed on the side of life, some are inscribed on the side of death. Sometimes, when the world rests in the middle, if a single virtuous person exists in the world who tips the balance, they are all inscribed for life; but if a single wicked person tips the balance of the world, they are all inscribed for death.[25]

"At that time the world was poised in the middle, and the Accuser wanted to denounce. Immediately, what is written? *YHVH said to Satan, 'Have you noticed My servant Job? For there is no one like him on earth'* (Job 1:8). As soon as he was singled out, the Accuser immediately seized him. Concerning this we have learned that one must not

separate himself from the entirety of the multitude, so that he not be singly designated and accused above. As is written of the Shunammite: *‘Among my own people I dwell* (2 Kings 4:13)—I don’t want to exclude myself from the entirety of the multitude. *Among my own people* I have dwelled until this day, and *among my own people* I will dwell, being known in a single entirety above.’[26]

“Here, since Job was known above and designated, the Accuser immediately seized him, saying, *‘Is it for nothing that Job reveres God?* (Job 1:9)—All his reverence for You and holding fast to Your side was not done for nothing. *Have You not hedged him round?* (ibid., 10). But take away all this goodness that You provided him, and immediately *he will surely curse You to Your face* (ibid., 11)—he will leave You and cling to the Other Side. For until now he has been eating at Your table; remove Your table from him and we will see which side he is on and to which side he clings!’[27]

“Immediately, *YHVH said to Satan, ‘Here, all that he has is in your hand’* (Job 1:12)—to demonstrate that Job’s reverence toward the blessed Holy One was not to protect his wealth.[28] From here we learn that all who revere the blessed Holy One because of their wealth or because of their children, such awe is not proper.[29] Therefore the Accuser accused, saying, *‘Is it for nothing that Job reveres God? Have You not hedged him round…. The work of his hands You have blessed*—that is why he reveres You!’ So permission was granted to assail him and to show that Job did not serve God out of love. For as soon as he was tested, he abandoned the way and did not stand firm. What is written? *In all this, Job did not sin with his lips* (Job 2:10)—*with his lips he did not sin*, but in his heart he did! Afterward, he sinned in everything.[30]

“Now, if you say that a person is not tested, see what is written: *YHVH tests the righteous* (Psalms 11:5)! Therefore, Job was tested. Although he did not stand firm fittingly, he

did not leave the domain of his Lord, clinging to the Other Side.[31]

"How long was his test? Twelve months—the dominion of that Other Side, as we have learned: 'The punishment of the wicked in Hell lasts twelve months.' Since he did not cling to the Other Side, it is written: *YHVH blessed* [34a] *the end of Job's life more than his beginning* (Job 42:12)."[32]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "This incident of Job is not a test from the blessed Holy One like the test of other righteous ones, for it is not written *God tested Job*, as it is written *God tested Abraham* (Genesis 22:1). Abraham himself, with his own hands, offered his only son to the blessed Holy One; whereas Job gave nothing, rendering nothing to the blessed Holy One. He was not told to, since it was revealed before Him that he could not bear this. Rather, he was delivered into the hand of the Accuser, and this was done through the justice of the blessed Holy One, who aroused this judgment toward him in that Accuser, as is written: *Have you noticed My servant Job?* (Job 1:8)."[33]

He opened, saying, "*It happened at the end of days that Cain brought from the fruit of the soil* (Genesis 4:3). מקץ ימים (*Mi-qets yamim*), *at the end of days*, and not מקץ ימין (*mi-qets yamin*), *at the end of the right*. He rejected *end of the right* and drew near *end of days*. And we have established: *As for you, go on till the end* (Daniel 12:13). Daniel asked, 'Which end: קץ הימים (*qets ha-yamim*), end of days, or קץ הימין (*qets ha-yamin*), end of the right?' Finally, He told him, 'לקץ הימין (*Le-qets ha-yamin*), *at the end of the right*.' This is what David feared, saying, *YHVH, let me know my end, what is the measure of my days* (Psalms 39:5)—whether end of days or end of the right. And here, what is written? *It happened at the end of days* (Genesis 4:3)—not *at the end of the right*. Therefore, his offering was not accepted, being from the Other Side entirely.[34]

"Come and see what is written: *And Abel, he too brought* (Genesis 4:4). Why *he too*? To amplify one with the

other. The offering belonged to the blessed Holy One entirely; the essence of the offering was for the blessed Holy One, while he gave a portion to the Other Side. Cain, however, provided the essence to *the end of days*—mystery of the Other Side—and gave a portion to the blessed Holy One; therefore it was not accepted.[35]

"Of Job, what is written? *His sons used to hold a feast.... When the days of feasting had run their course, they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them* (Job 1:4–5).[36] At each day's feast the Accuser was present, but could not prevail against him. How do we know? As is written: *Have You not hedged him round—him and his household and all that he has?* (ibid., 10). He never gave him a portion at all. What is written? *Offering ascent offerings according to the number of them all* (ibid., 5). Ascent offering rises above, providing no portion to the Other Side. For if he had given him a portion, he would not have prevailed against him later; everything that he took was his to take.[37]

"Now, you might ask, 'Why did the blessed Holy One harm him?' Well, if he had given him a portion, he would have cleared the way and withdrawn from the Temple, and the side of holiness would have ascended above, above. But he did not do so, and therefore the blessed Holy One demanded justice.[38]

"Further, just as he separated good and evil—not encompassing them—He judged him correspondingly: giving him good, and then evil, and then restoring him to good. For this is fitting for a human being: to know good, to know evil, and to restore oneself to good. This is the mystery of faith.[39]

"Come and see! Job was one of Pharaoh's servants, and this is what is written of him: *Whoever feared the word of YHVH among Pharaoh's servants* (Exodus 9:20)."[40]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Now it is fitting to reveal mysteries cleaving above and below.[41] Come and see: The

blessed Holy One wished to uproot all from their places, but Job was shielding Pharaoh. Once he was weakened, He wreaked vengeance upon Pharaoh.[42] What is written? בא (*Bo*), *Come, to Pharaoh* (Exodus 10:1). The verse should read לך (*Lekh*), *Go, to Pharaoh*. Why *bo, come*? Well, because the blessed Holy One brought him into chamber after chamber, to a certain high and mighty rung, from which numerous rungs unfold. Who is that? Mystery of the great serpent. Moses was afraid of him, approaching only his streams and rungs; but him he feared and would not approach, for he saw him rooted above. When the blessed Holy One saw that Moses was afraid, and that other appointed messengers above could not approach him, the blessed Holy One said to him, *I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great sea serpent sprawling amidst his streams, who said, 'My Nile is mine; I made it for myself'* (Ezekiel 29:3). The blessed Holy One, and no one else, had to wage war against him, as is said: *I, YHVH* (Exodus 12:12).[43] The mystery of the wisdom of *the great sea serpent sprawling amidst his streams* has been demonstrated to those fathomers who know the mysteries of their Lord."[44]

Rabbi Shim'on opened, "*God created the great sea serpents and every living creature that crawls, which the water swarmed, of each kind* (Genesis 1:21). This verse has been established, but *God created the sea serpents*—as we have established: This is [34b] Leviathan and his mate. תנינם (*Tanninim*), *Sea serpents*—spelled deficiently, because the blessed Holy One slew the female, preserving her for the righteous, as has been established.[45]

"*The great sea serpent* (Ezekiel 29:3)—there are nine rivers in which he sprawls, and one river whose waters are calm, into which pour blessings of the waters of the Garden three times a year. When twice, that river is blessed, but not greatly; when once, not so.[46]

“The sea serpent enters that river, gathering strength, swimming along—entering the sea, swallowing fish of many kinds, gaining dominion, and returning to that river. These nine rivers flow and rise, banked by numerous trees and grasses of various kinds.[47]

“The first river: Left side issues through a single channel, trickling three drops, each drop dividing into three drops, every drop forming a river. These are nine rivers, gathering strength, sweeping along, circling through all those expanses.[48]

“From what remains of those drops, when they finish issuing, a single drop remains, issuing gently, falling among them, forming a river. This river is the one that we mentioned, flowing calmly. This river—when that flowing stream issues other drops of blessing from the right side, from what remains of those drops, a single drop remains, gently from those blessings, falling into the river that is calm. This is the finest river of all.[49]

“When the four rivers issuing from the Garden of Eden flow forth and branch, the one called Pishon flows into this river, merging with it. Therefore, the Kingdom of Babylon is comprised in it, being identical with Pishon. From this river are fed and filled all those other rivers.[50]

“In every single river, one sea serpent swims along—and there are nine, each one’s head pierced with a hole, as is said: *You broke the heads of sea serpents upon the waters* (Psalms 74:13). Even *the great sea serpent* is like this, for all breathe upward, not downward.[51]

“*In the beginning God created* (Genesis 1:1), and it is written: *God created the great sea serpents* (ibid., 21). To every act of those ten utterances correspond those ten rivers, with one sea serpent vibrating the wind, corresponding to each one. So, every seventy years the world trembles, because when this *great sea serpent* raises his fins and shakes, all tremble in those rivers, the whole

world trembles, the earth quakes—all encompassed by this *great sea serpent*."[52]

The earth was waste and empty, with darkness over the abyss (Genesis 1:2). Rabbi Shim'on said, "The Companions study the account of Creation and comprehend it, but few know how to allude thereby to the mystery of *the great sea serpent*. Concerning this we have learned that the world unfolds solely on its fins.[53]

"Come and see: *The earth was* תהו ובהו (*tohu va-vohu*), *waste and empty*. We have learned: *was*, as we have established; for when this *great sea serpent* enters the first river, which we mentioned, it becomes full and overflows, extinguishing sparks that scintillated in those worlds that were previously destroyed.

"Those other sea serpents that we mentioned existed and did not exist. Why? Because their strength weakened, so that they would not obliterate the world—except once every seventy years, when they are empowered by the strength of that *great sea serpent*; he alone empowers. And if his female stood beside him, the world could not endure them; so before the blessed Holy One slew the female, *the earth was tohu va-vohu, waste and empty*—it was *tohu, waste*; after He slew her, it was *bohu*, 'containing substance,' beginning to exist.[54]

"*With darkness* (Genesis 1:2)—before illumination of the act that was performed. What did the blessed Holy One do? He crushed the head of the male above, who was overwhelmed. For the abyss below did not shine. Why did it not shine? Because this *great sea serpent* blew upon the abyss, darkening it, not undulating below. Another wind—from above—blew, striking that wind, taming it, as is written: *and the wind of God hovering over the face of the waters* (Genesis 1:2). This corresponds to what we have learned, that the blessed Holy One struck wind against wind and created the world.[55]

“*God said, ‘Let there be light*!’ *And there was light* (Genesis 1:3). Radiance from above shone, striking [35a] the blowing wind, and he withdrew from the abyss, covering it no more. Once the abyss was illumined and he withdrew, radiance shone upon his head, water gushed from his brow, and a wind blew above. He shone from this radiance until his light descended, sparkling into seventy-two gleams of the sun. Once those gleams were traced in the sun below, the wicked of the world became aware of them and worshiped the sun. When the blessed Holy One gazed upon those wicked ones, He removed His light and concealed it. Why did He conceal it? Because that sea serpent was ascending and descending, striking those rivers, until it was concealed, no longer revealed. He sowed seed for a Righteous One, gardener of the Garden; seed sown in the Garden—concealedly, hiddenly—is this light.[56]

“When *the great sea serpent* saw that the seed of this light was growing in the Garden, he aroused the other side, the river called Gihon. The waters of Gihon branched out, one of its forks entering that seed sprouting in the Garden, illumining it with anointing oil of this seed, and it is called Gihon. Some of the anointing oil of this seed was preserved for the anointing of King Solomon when he ascended the throne, as is written: *Bring him down to Gihon…and let* [*the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan*] *anoint him there* (1 Kings 1:33–34)—and nowhere else, because King David knew this. Its other waters reached another kingdom, a kingdom that is strong.[57]

“This *great sea serpent* aroused it, and the fins of this serpent rose in that river, gathering strength.[58] All those other rivers rise and fall through the power of this *great sea serpent*, who returns and enters the calm river, lying quietly there.

“Then, when that light was concealed—to be absorbed by the gardener whom we have mentioned—primordial darkness emerged, spreading over his head, through that

hole knocked in it. A single thread was stretched between the radiance of concealed light and the dark of darkness, as is written: *God separated the light from the darkness* (Genesis 1:4).[59]

"This sea serpent returned within the thread of separation, separating those rivers within darkness; and through that separation, fish separated from one another according to their species. When upper, holy waters were separated, all these rivers separated, entering that calm river, clearest of all—flowing in and out three times a day.[60]

"All the fish breeding in those rivers are distinct from one another and are called Nights. These are heads of all those fish who go outside, ruling over them all, called Firstborn of Egypt; from here, the firstborn were scattered. All of them are nourished by the saturation of those rivers, and this *great sea serpent* rules over them all. All by separation of upper waters, as is written: *Let it separate water from water* (Genesis 1:6). Holy waters were distinguished, separated above; lower waters were separated below—all, these from those, holy and unholy. Therefore supernal angels are called 'separate,' because they were separated from one another according to their kinds.[61]

"*God said, 'Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed'* (Genesis 1:11).[62] A mystery: When this *great sea serpent* blows wind through that hole and undulates upward, he dries up all these plants, until another wind blows against that wind, calming it down—and plants grow as before, gaining sway, offering praise and thanks to the blessed Holy One.[63]

"From the left side, within the calm river, emerge beasts of various species, trying to reach those plants; but they cannot and they return to their places.[64] All those rivers flow along with that serpent controlling them, and they surround those plants but cannot prevail—except sometimes, when the supernal wind does not blow and he

vibrates wind through that hole upward, as we have established. Then wind dominates those plants, and the calm river returns to its place, rising and falling; since its waters are calm, it flows gently. This *great sea serpent* rises toward those rivers, and all the plants grow around the calm river, trees growing on every side. Then that serpent rises and swells among them, returning to all those rivers.

"*God said*, '*Let there be* מארת (*me'orot*), *lights, in the expanse of heaven*' (Genesis 1:14). This is נחש בריח (*naḥash bariaḥ*), *elusive snake*. Why *bariaḥ*, bar? Because he is shut in on two sides and never comes out—except once every Jubilee. In books of the ancients: This is the writhing snake, always tortuous, bringing curses upon the world. When this one rises, the power of that sea serpent [35b] is broken and he cannot endure, so his body perishes. For the blessed Holy One overwhelms him in the sea when He enters it; He tramples on strength of the sea—strength of the sea being the sea serpent, as is said: *He tramples on the back of Sea* (Job 9:8). When this snake rises, what is written? *He will slay the serpent of the sea* (Isaiah 27:1)—*the great sea serpent*. Therefore it is written: *I am against you* (Ezekiel 29:3).[65] This snake is מארת (*me'erat*), curse—entirely curses—for he overpowers him with the potency of that great river called Tigris, as we have established.[66]

"That snake is on dry land. When they come out against each other, the one on dry land always triumphs, since all his paths and powers are on dry land, and he eats dust and earth constantly, as is said: *Dust shall you eat all the days of your life* (Genesis 3:14). This one grows in dust; that one grows in water. A snake growing in water is not as strong in potency as one growing on dry land; so it is spelled מארת (*me'erat*), curse, deficiently. For this one confronts that one of the water; yet even though he confronts him, the blessed Holy One alone fights him, slaying him in the midst of the sea, as we have established, because of his arrogance, as is

written: *who said, 'My Nile is mine; I made it for myself'* (Ezekiel 29:3)."[67]

YHVH will pass through to strike Egypt (Exodus 12:23).[68]

It has been taught: Rabbi Yose said, "This verse is difficult. Did He *see the blood* and then *pass over*? This would imply that He made a sign. And if you say that it was because of the blood, which is a *mitsvah*, then why outside, and why on three places on the door? Look at what is written: *He reveals the deep and hidden* (Daniel 2:22)! Why was the blood revealed *on the lintel and on the two doorposts*?[69]

"Well, as has been taught, it is written: *YHVH saw and He spurned* (Deuteronomy 32:19), and similarly: *God saw that the evil of the human creature was immense on earth* (Genesis 6:5). And we have learned: Providence above does not appear unless an action pertaining to it appears below, enacted. Until such an act is actualized, no attention is given to inflicting harm—except for the thought of idolatry, as is written: *Take care, lest your heart be seduced* (Deuteronomy 11:17). Once an act is performed, providence above arouses; so all, whether good or evil, depends entirely upon action."[70]

Rabbi Yose said, "All the streets of Egypt were full of idols. Furthermore, in every single house there were types of sorcery, by which they linked themselves with those nethermost crowns below, arousing impure spirit among them.[71]

"Mystery of the matter! It is written: *Take a bundle of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin and touch* [*some of the blood that is in the basin*] *to the lintel and to the two doorposts* (Exodus 12:22). Why *a bundle of hyssop*? In order to exterminate the impure spirit and to display on their doors, in these three places, complete faith—one here, one there, and one between them. Therefore, *YHVH will pass*

over the entrance and will not allow the Destroyer to enter your houses to strike (ibid., 23)—because he sees the Holy Name marked on the door."[72]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "If so, why blood? For we have learned: White and red and one blended of colors."[73]

He replied, "There were two bloods: one of circumcision and one of the Paschal Lamb. Of circumcision, Compassion; of the Paschal Lamb, Judgment."[74]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Not so! Rather, as I have learned: The blessed Holy One turned that blood into Compassion, as if it were white among colors, as is written: *I passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood* (Ezekiel 16:6)—even though it was red, it turned into Compassion, as is written: '*In your blood, live*!' Therefore, the door was marked on three sides: one here, one there, and one between them."[75]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah taught, "Two bloods appeared, corresponding to two crowns arousing above at that moment."[76]

Rabbi Yose said, "One crown, blended of two hidden aspects: [36a] Compassion and Judgment."[77]

Rabbi Abba said, "In so many places the blessed Holy One cares for His children! A person builds a house; the blessed Holy One says to him, 'Write My name and place it at the entrance. You dwell within your house, and I will sit outside at your entrance to protect you.' Here, He said, 'Mark on your entrance My mystery of faith. You dwell within your house, and I will guard you from outside.' As is written: *And as for you, none of you shall go out from the entrance of his house until morning*, and: *When He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts,* YHVH *will pass over the entrance and will not allow the Destroyer to enter your houses to strike* (Exodus 12:22–23)."[78]

Rabbi Abba said further, "At that moment, they followed the pattern of the Holy Name. Just as the Holy Name turned at that moment into Judgment, so too at this moment they displayed Judgment, as is written: *When He sees the blood*

on the lintel and on the two doorposts. This sign was entirely red, indicating that it had turned into Judgment to wreak vengeance.

"Mystery of the matter: As it is above at that moment, so it must be displayed below—if Compassion, compassion; if Judgment, judgment—as is written: *Dip it in the blood that is in the basin and touch* [*some of the blood that is in the basin*] *to the lintel* (Exodus 12:22)."[79]

And as for you, none of you shall go out from the entrance of his house until morning (ibid.). Why? Because we have learned: Rabbi Yitsḥak said in the name of Rabbi Yirmeyah, "A person should not walk on the street or appear on the street when Judgment looms over the place, since once permission has been granted to the Destroyer, whoever encounters him is harmed." And here, since Judgment prevailed, they were not to go out.[80]

It has been taught: Rabbi Yose said, "By the very entity through which Judgment appeared for the Egyptians, Compassion appeared for Israel, as is written: *I will see the blood and I will pass over you* (Exodus 12:13)." Similarly it has been taught: In all those holy crowns above, where Judgment appears, Compassion appears—all simultaneously.[81]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah taught, "It is written: *YHVH will strike Egypt, striking and healing* (Isaiah 19:22)—*striking* Egypt, *and healing* Israel. Why *and healing*? From their having been circumcised they needed healing." And it has been taught: At the same moment the Egyptians were struck, the Israelites were healed. For as Rabbi Yose said in the name of Rabbi Ḥizkiyah, "Why is it written: *YHVH will pass over the entrance* (Exodus 12:23)? Why *over* הפתח (*ha-petaḥ*), *the entrance*? The verse should read *YHVH will pass over you*. However, *over ha-petaḥ, the opening*—the actual opening, opening of the body. What is the opening of the body? You must admit, this is circumcision."[82]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “At the moment that Holy Crown split, Male mingled with Her. Who is Male? Supernal Love. For it has been proven that one without the other cannot ascend. So this one strikes and that one heals, all simultaneously.[83]

“It is written: *YHVH will pass over the opening* (Exodus 12:23)—*over the* well-known *opening*. Why *the opening*? Because it is the opening and flowing of spirit and body. Come and see: Until a man is circumcised, he is obstructed and closed on every side. Once he is circumcised, he is opened totally, no longer obstructed and closed. This corresponds to the mystery that we have learned: *He was sitting at the opening of the tent* (Genesis 18:1)—because this י (*yod*) was revealed.”[84]

What does this signify? Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “That through this revelation he ensconced Love in Righteousness, which is the opening of the supernal holy Tabernacle, as implied by what is written: *the tent—the* well-known *tent*.”[85]

Rabbi El’azar said, “When this י (*yod*) was revealed, he was gladdened and blessed *at the opening of the tent* of this Righteousness, to be sweetened by Love, as is written: *in the heat of the day* (Genesis 18:1)—the time when Love, share of Abraham, prevails. How do we know that this *opening of the tent* was sweetened toward Abraham? As is written: *YHVH blessed Abraham with everything* (ibid. 24:1)—sweetened by Love once י (*yod*) was revealed.”[86]

Rabbi Abba said, “*He was sitting at the opening of the tent*, as is written: *YHVH blessed Abraham with everything*—for this is holy opening, tenth crown.[87]

“כחום (*Ke-ḥom*), *As the heat of, the day*—as the crown of Love was given to him, as is written: *as the heat of the day*. As he sat in this, so he sat in that, for one cannot ascend without the other.”[88]

Alternatively, [36b] *YHVH will pass through to strike Egypt* (Exodus 12:23). What does this mean: *will pass*? That

He passed beyond the strict law—detaching the crowns, which were linked with other crowns above them, from their sustenance.[89] He passed over His ways in order to execute judgment against them and avenge Israel. Similarly with every *He will pass, I will pass, He passed*—for the blessed Holy One passed over all His ways, whether toward Judgment or toward Compassion. Here, *will pass*, in order to execute judgment; there, *He passed* (Exodus 34:6), in order to be compassionate.[90]

It happened in the middle of the night (Exodus 12:29).[91]

Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose were traveling from Usha to Lydda, and Rabbi Ḥiyya was riding on a donkey. Rabbi Yose said, “Let us sit here and pray, for the time of *minḥah* has arrived, and we have learned: ‘One should always be careful about the prayer of *minḥah*.’ Why ‘careful’? Because that is the time when Judgment impends, and one must concentrate his mind.”[92]

Rabbi Ḥiyya dismounted and they prayed.

As they were traveling, the sun inclined to set. Rabbi Ḥiyya said to Rabbi Yose, “Why are you silent?”[93]

Rabbi Yose replied, “I was contemplating in my mind that the world endures only because of the leaders of the people. If the people’s leaders are worthy, it is good for the people and good for the world. If they are unworthy, woe to the people, woe to the world!”[94]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “Certainly so! How do we know? Because it is written: *I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills like sheep without a shepherd; and YHVH said, ‘These have no masters; let each one return to his home in peace’* (2 Chronicles 18:16). *Let* [*each one*] *return*—the verse should read *let* [*each one*] *remain*. *To his home*—the verse should read *in his home*. For they were still in their abode.[95]

“However, we have learned as follows: If the head of the people is unworthy, the people are seized for his sin. How do we know? As is written: *David said, ‘It is I who sinned*. *And these sheep, what have they done*?’ (2 Samuel 24:17)—David sinned and Israel suffered.[96] And if the leader is seized for his sin, the people are saved, since Judgment does not befall them; for so it is written: *YHVH said, ‘These have no masters’*—that is, if these are no longer the people’s leaders—then from this way, *each one will return to his home in peace*, all being saved if their leaders are seized. Even Jehoshaphat was ordained to be punished, because he had joined Ahab—were it not for that cry, as is written: *And Jehoshaphat cried out* (2 Chronicles 18:31).”[97]

As they were traveling, night dusked.[98] They said, “What should we do? If we go on, night is darkening! If we stay, it is scary!” They turned off the road and sat beneath a tree, sitting and discussing words of Torah, and not sleeping.

At midnight, they saw a doe passing in front of them, crying loudly. Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose got up, trembling. They heard a voice, proclaiming: “Those awake, arise! Those asleep, awake! Worlds, prepare to meet your Lord! For a voice has issued, writhing the doe above and below, as is written: *The voice of YHVH causes does to calve, and strips forests bare* (Psalms 29:9). Look, your Lord is going out to the Garden of Eden to delight with the righteous!”[99]

Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose sat down. Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “Now it is precisely midnight! Happy is our share that we were privileged to hear this!

“Come and see the mystery of the matter! When the blessed Holy One appears above the Garden, the whole Garden gathers, inseparable from Eden. This Eden—springs issue in numerous ways and paths, and the whole Garden is called Bundle of Life, where the righteous delight

in the world that is coming. At this moment the blessed Holy One reveals Himself to them."[100]

Rabbi Yose said, "Many times I have asked about what is written: *It happened in the middle of the night that YHVH struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt* (Exodus 12:29). Why didn't this happen during the day, so that the miracle would be publicized? And why did all those weaklings behind the millstones and those little lambs die, rather than the commanders and mighty warriors—as happened with Sennacherib, as is written: *An angel of YHVH went out and struck down in the Assyrian camp…* (2 Kings 19:35)? And we have learned that they were all kings, princes, royal officials, and commanders; [37a] so the power of a single messenger of His was more manifest than here, where it should have been greater!"[101]

He replied, "You have asked well, and I have heard nothing about this and will not speak.[102] But look, we have been privileged to all this, and the way is paved before us[103]—and I have heard that Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai is purifying the streets of Tiberias. Let us go to him!"[104]

They sat until day dawned. As light rose, they arose and went on. When they reached him, they found him sitting with a book of *aggadah* in his hand.

He opened, saying, *"All the nations are as nothingness before Him; as nothing and emptiness are they reckoned by Him* (Isaiah 40:17).[105] Since it says *All the nations are* כאין (*ke-ayin*), *as nothingness, before Him*, why is it written *as nothing and emptiness are they reckoned by Him*? Well, we have learned that in the opinion of all the nations of the world, their faith is *ke-ayin, like Nothingness*—un-apprehended by those above or below—and they confront Him with a faith of foolishness. However, *as nothing and emptiness are they reckoned by Him*—like a whirlwind swirling in emptiness, as is written: *All the inhabitants of earth are reckoned as nothing* (Daniel 4:32)."[106]

He opened again, saying, "את השמים (*Et ha-shamayim*), *The heavens*, ואת הארץ (*ve-et ha-arets*), *and the earth* (Genesis 1:1). את (*Et*)—right hand of the blessed Holy One. ואת (*Ve-et*)—His left hand. This teaches that the blessed Holy One stretched out His right hand and created *et ha-shamayim, the heavens*, and He stretched out His left hand and created *et ha-arets, the earth*, as is written: *My own hand founded earth, and My right hand spread out heaven. I summon them—they stand together* (Isaiah 48:13).[107] What does this mean: *they stand together*? Would you imagine heaven and earth? Not so! Rather, right and left, namely *et, ve-et*. How do *they stand together*? Through זאת (*zot*), this, the one who reigns at midnight, for *et, ve-et* is included in *zot*.[108] And we have learned: It is written את הכל (*Et ha-kol*), *Everything, He has made right in its time* (Ecclesiastes 3:11). *Et*—as we have said. *Ha-kol, everything*—as is said: *YHVH blessed Abraham* בכל (*ba-kol*), *with everything* (Genesis 24:1), and it has been taught: that crown called *zot*, blended of *et, ve-et*. It rules at midnight in two aspects: Compassion and Judgment—Compassion for Israel and Judgment for the other nations."[109]

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, saying, "Would it please my Master if I say a word for which we came? It is written: *It happened in the middle of the night that YHVH struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt* (Exodus 12:29). From what my Master said, it follows that this coincides with that word. As for us, the way has been paved before us to come and pose this question to you."[110]

He opened, saying, "*Who is like YHVH our God, enthroned on high?* (Psalms 113:5). *Who is like YHVH our God*—ascending to be enthroned, crowned with a holy supernal crown, sparkling radiance of crowns and diadems. *Looking far below* (ibid., 6)—descending in His crowns, from crown to crown, from diadem to diadem, from radiance to radiance, from lamp to lamp, to gaze upon

those above and below, as is written: *YHVH looks down from heaven upon humankind to see*… (Psalms 14:2).[111]

"Come and see! It is written: *It happened* בחצי (*ba-ḥatsi*), *in the half of, the night*. The verse should read בחצות (*ba-ḥatsot*), *in the middle of, the night*—or כחצות (*ka-ḥatsot*), *around the middle of*, as Moses said.[112] And if, as our colleagues have said: So that Pharaoh's astrologers would not say, 'Moses is a liar!'—then the difficulty persists in three aspects, which even the Israelites would have noted.[113]

"First: If so, the verse should read *Moses said*, '*Ka-ḥatsot, Around the middle of, the night*.' Why *Thus says YHVH* (Exodus 11:4)—as if He could not determine the precise moment? For they would not blame Moses, but rather the Patron, since he said *Thus says YHVH*.[114]

"Secondly, look! Moses said, *to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones* (Exodus 11:5)—and it was not so, but rather: *to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon* (ibid. 12:29). Now, even the Israelites would say so, since the words were not confirmed.[115]

"Third, he said in the name of the Patron: *ka-ḥatsot, around the middle of* [*the night*] (Exodus 11:4), and yet it is written *It happened ba-ḥatsi, in the half of, the night* (ibid. 12:29).[116]

"Further, your question exceeds a burden that an animal cannot bear! However, all is a supernal mystery among Reapers of the Field, and all is rectified for the Faithful Prophet.[117]

"Happy is the share of Moses, of whom is written *You are the fairest* מבני אדם (*mi-benei adam*), *of humans*; *grace is poured upon your lips, because God, your God, has anointed you with oil of* [37b] *joy beyond your companions* (Psalms 45:3, 8).[118]

"*You are the fairest mi-benei adam, of the children of Adam*—fairer than Seth and Enoch.[119]

"חן (*Ḥen*), *Grace, is poured upon your lips*—than נח (*Noaḥ*), Noah, and his sons.[120]

“*Because God, your God, has anointed you*—than Abraham and Isaac.[121]

“*With oil of joy*—than Jacob.[122]

“*Beyond your companions*—than other prophets.

“Now, would a man who ascended supernal rungs, attained by no other human, not know what he was saying? Rather, we have learned as follows: The crown that is called זאת (*zot*), *this*, is called *woman*, as is said: *This shall be called* אשה (*ishshah*), *Woman*. Why? *For* מאיש (*me-ish*), *from man, was this taken* (Genesis 2:23). Who is *man*? The one called זה (*zeh*), *this*. This is *man*, male, as is said: *For zeh, this, man Moses* (Exodus 32:1); *this man* (Genesis 24:58). *Man* is called *this*, and *this* is called *man*. And *zot, this*, was taken from *zeh, this*—male.[123]

“So, She is תמר (*tamar*), a palm tree—male and female—for one does not rise without the other.[124] *Tamar*—as is said: תימרות (*timerot*), *columns of, smoke* (Song of Songs 3:6). Just as smoke rises white and black, so here all is included in midnight to enact its decrees in a single moment—white for Israel, black for other nations.[125]

“Until this night is divided, it does not enact its decrees. How do we know? From Abraham, as is written: *Night was divided against them* (Genesis 14:15)—divided to enact its decrees.[126] Here too, Moses said כחצות (*ka-ḥatsot*) (Exodus 11:4). What is *ka-ḥatsot*? As is said: כעלות המנחה (*ka-alot ha-minḥah*), *when the meal-offering was presented* (2 Kings 3:20); כעלות גדיש (*ka-alot gadish*), *as a shock of grain rises* [*in its season*] (Job 5:26). Here too, *ka-ḥatsot*—*when (the night) is divided*; for Moses knew that it does not enact its decrees until it is divided.[127]

“And so it was, for night did not enact its decrees until it was divided—in the second half, as is written: *It happened* בחצי (*ba-ḥatsi*), *in the half of, the night* (Exodus 12:29). What is *ba-ḥatsi*? In the second half, when She reigns, appearing constantly to enact decrees; every decree enacted at night is enacted in the second half.[128]

"*YHVH struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt* (Exodus 12:29)—when the blessed Holy One arouses in the Garden of Eden to delight with the righteous, and a herald emerges and proclaims: *Awake, north wind! Come, south wind! Blow upon my garden, let its spices flow. Let my beloved come into his garden and eat its luscious fruits* (Song of Songs 4:16). What does this mean: *and eat its luscious fruits*? Offerings presented to Him from the souls of the righteous. This is at midnight; at other times, other offerings, literally.[129]

"ויהוה (*Va-YHVH*), *And YHVH* (Exodus 12:29)—He and His court. *And YHVH*—He and His judgments.[130]

"*Struck every firstborn* (ibid.). *Struck*—Moses said, rather, *will die* (Exodus 11:5). Why הכה (*hikkah*), *struck*? Because כה (*koh*), *now*, aroused—just as Moses had threatened, as is written: *You have not listened until koh, now* (Exodus 7:16).[131]

"It has been taught: Pharaoh was wiser than all his sorcerers, and he perceived that this one would execute judgment upon him and would eventually destroy his land, as Moses said: בזאת (*Be-zot*), *By this, shall you know that I am YHVH* (Exodus 7:17). As for him, what is written? *Pharaoh turned*—turning his heart from this thought, as is said: *Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take to heart* זאת (*zot*), *this, too* (ibid., 23). *Too*—encompassing this one who would eventually destroy his land, and he did not take to heart *zot, this*.[132]

"*Every firstborn* (Exodus 12:29)—even high and low rungs were severed from their links, all those ruling by their wisdom, as is written: *in the land of Egypt* (ibid.). All those high and low rungs torn from their links are revealed in a verse, as is written: *from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones, and every firstborn of the beasts* (ibid. 11:5)—look, all of them revealed in the verse![133]

"Gist of the word:[134] *From the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne*—low crown of regal adornment of supernal Kingship.[135]

"*To the firstborn of the slave girl*—left crown, below regal adornment; behind four millstones, four camps, for it is written: *behind the millstones*, not *from the millstones*.[136]

"*And every firstborn of the beasts*—lowest of the low, female of females, found among donkeys and beasts, large and small; men and females receive from them.[137]

"*To the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon* (Exodus 12:29)—those issuing from *the slave girl*, through whom they forced captives to be enslaved to them forever, never going free.[138]

"Relying on these rungs, the Egyptians refused—for thereby they entangled Israel, so that they could never escape bondage. Here the power and dominion of the blessed Holy One was revealed, and this memory will be not be destroyed among Israel throughout all generations. [38a] Were it not for the might and power of the blessed Holy One, all the kings of the world, sorcerers of the world, and the wise of the world would be unable to deliver Israel from slavery; for He untied their bonds and smashed all those crowns to bring them out. Of this is written *Who would not revere You, O King of the nations? For it befits You, since among all the wise of the nations and among all their kingdoms, there is none like You* (Jeremiah 10:7)."[139]

Rabbi Shim'on wept, raising his voice and groaning. He said, "Cluster of chiding! Have you pondered how many times the blessed Holy One praises Himself? *Who brought you out of the land of Egypt* (Exodus 20:2); *YHVH your God brought you out of Egypt* (Deuteronomy 16:1); *YHVH your God brought you out from there* (ibid. 5:15); *I brought out your forces* (Exodus 12:17); *Remember this day on which you went out of Egypt* (ibid. 13:3); *He brought you out of Egypt through His presence with His great power*

(Deuteronomy 4:37); *YHVH brought you out from here* (Exodus 13:3).[140]

"However, it has been taught: There are ten crowns below, corresponding to the pattern above, all of them concealed in these three that we have mentioned. With three knots they bound them on Israel's three rungs, so that they would never escape their bondage.[141]

"Happy are you, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by whose merit the knots were untied! The blessed Holy One remembered your three knots of faith, as is written: *YHVH remembered His covenant with Abraham* (one knot, of Abraham), *with Isaac* (a second knot, of Isaac), *and with Jacob* (a third, complete knot, of Jacob) (Exodus 2:24).[142]

"It has been taught: All festive seasons, holidays, and Sabbaths are in memory of this, and upon this they all are based; for were it not for this, there would be no observance of festive seasons, holidays, or Sabbaths. Consequently, the memory of Egypt has not been eliminated from any festive season, holiday, or Sabbath. Come and see: This is the foundation and root of Torah and its commandments and the entire faith of Israel.[143]

"Further, why did it not occur by day, as you asked? We have learned: It is written *Today you are going out* (Exodus 13:4), and it is written *YHVH your God brought you out of Egypt by night* (Deuteronomy 16:1). However, it has been taught: The essence of Israel's deliverance was solely *night*, for *night* untied knots and wreaked vengeance, whereas day brought them out brazenly, as is written: *The Children of Israel went out with a high hand before the eyes of all Egypt* (Numbers 33:3). And it is written: *And the Egyptians were burying those whom YHVH had struck down* [*among them: every firstborn*] (ibid., 4). This is publicizing the miracle."[144]

Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose came and prostrated themselves before him and kissed his hands. They wept, and said, "Higher and lower engravings raise their heads

because of you! The blessed Holy One made Jerusalem below corresponding to the pattern above. Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai made the walls of the city and its gates! Whoever enters does not enter until the gates are opened. Whoever ascends does not ascend until the steps of the walls are firm.[145] It is written: *All your males shall appear in the presence of the Lord* YHVH (Exodus 34:23)—this is Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai! For whoever is male of males must appear before him."[146]

He said to them, "I have not yet finished responding to your question. For look at what we have learned: *YHVH struck every firstborn* (Exodus 12:29)—*every firstborn*, unspecified, as we have said. It was all! Those who died were knotters of knots, who wielded those crowns by their sorcery—some of them wielding upper ones and some of them lower ones, even though all of them are low.[147]

"The whole land of Egypt was full of sorcery, and it is written: *for there was no house without someone dead* (Exodus 12:30). Judgment was executed against all, when they all gathered in their houses—not scattered in the wilderness and in the fields, but rather all found at home—and Night executed its judgments upon all at that moment.[148]

"It has been taught: Night shone as a fierce day in Tammuz, and the whole people witnessed the judgments of the blessed Holy One, as is written: *Night shines as day; darkness and light are the same* (Psalms 139:12).[149]

"When they came out, they were all found dead in the streets in full view, so they had to bury them. This was the hardest of all for them: on one side they saw Israel leaving [38b] in front of their eyes, and on the other side they saw their dead. Completely publicizing the miracle, for nothing like this ever happened since the day the world was created.[150]

"Come and see what is written: *It is* ליל שמורים (*leil shimmurim*), *a night of watches, for YHVH, for bringing them*

out of the land of Egypt; this הלילה (*ha-lailah*), *night, is YHVH's, watches* (Exodus 12:42). This verse is difficult. Since it says *leil, night of*, why *shimmurim, watches*, and not שמור (*shimmur*), *watch*—the inferable word? And it is written *this ha-lailah, night*—first it says *leil, night of*, and now *lailah, night*.[151]

"Well, we have learned as follows: It is written *If there is* נערה (*na'arah*), *a girl, a virgin* (Deuteronomy 22:23)—spelled נער (*na'ara*). Why? Because as long as she has not received a male, she is called *na'ara*; once she has received a male, she is called *na'arah*. Here too, ליל (*leil*), *night of*, for She had not yet received a male—even though it is written *shimmurim, watches*, but only because the male was about to unite with Her. And when the male did unite with Her, it is written *this* הלילה (*ha-lailah*), *night, is YHVH's, shimmurim, watches*—*watches*, male and female. Therefore it is written: *this ha-lailah, night*.[152]

"Wherever male and female appear, praise belongs only to the male. So, Israel offered their praise to the male, not to the female, as is written: זה (*Zeh*), *This, is my God, and I will glorify Him* (Exodus 15:2). For wherever male and female appear, praise pertains only to the male. For this, Israel awaits, as is written: *Zeh, This, is YHVH for whom we have waited; let us rejoice and exult in His salvation!* (Isaiah 25:9). For so He intends to do for them, as is written: *As in the days of your coming out of the land of Egypt, I will show him wonders* (Micah 7:15).[153]

"This mystery is as follows: Just as here, *leil, night of*, and *lailah, night*, so He intends to do, as is written: *Watchman, what* מלילה (*mi-lailah*), *of the night? Watchman, what* מליל (*mi-leil*), *of the night?* (Isaiah 21:11). Just as there, watching and *leil, night of*, so here, watching and *leil*. Just as there, watching and *lailah, night*, so here, watching and *lailah*.[154]

"*Lailah, Night*, is named alongside the male, as is written: *Morning comes, and also lailah* (Isaiah 21:12). *Morning*, as is said: *Abraham rose early in the morning* (Genesis 22:3)—

his actual quality. It is written: *O YHVH, in the morning hear my voice* (Psalms 5:4)—*morning*, precisely!”[155]

Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose sat, and he taught them the secret of the Law of the Priests.[156] Every day they returned and sat before him. One day Rabbi Shim’on went outside; they went with him, and they reached a field and sat down.

Rabbi Shim’on opened, saying, “Come and see! It is written: *I have seen everything in the days of my futility: a righteous one perishes in his righteousness, and a wicked one prolongs his life in his evil* (Ecclesiastes 7:15). Solomon, whose wisdom was greater than anyone’s, what is he saying in this verse? Well, Solomon is intimating a hint of wisdom; for we see that the ways of the blessed Holy One are not so, since it is written: *To give a man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds* (Jeremiah 17:10).[157]

“But there are two topics that he is implying here. For we have learned: When the judgments of the blessed Holy One seek to scrutinize the world, eyeing it—as is written: *The eyes of YHVH range over the whole earth* (Zechariah 4:10)—and they find wicked ones in the generation, then the righteous one existing in the generation is seized for their sins. As for the wicked, the blessed Holy One delays His anger, waiting for them to repent; and if not, no one is found to plead mercy for them, as is written: *a righteous one perishes in his righteousness*—because he is righteous, he is removed from the world.[158]

“Therefore we have learned: ‘A person should dwell only in a place inhabited by people of deeds.’ Why? Because woe to one who dwells among the wicked, for he is seized for their sins! And if he dwells among the righteous, on account of them he is treated well.[159]

“For Rav Ḥisda lived originally among Cappadocians, where times were stressful for him and sickness pursued him. Then he moved and settled among the shield bearers of Sepphoris, where he excelled and attained many benefits, many riches, much Torah. He said, ‘I attained all

this because I entered among those on whom their Lord cares to bestow goodness!’[160]

“Alternatively, *I have seen everything in the days of my futility* (Ecclesiastes 7:15). Now, would Solomon—who possessed higher rungs of wisdom than his entire generation, and who engaged in Torah to achieve goodness and truth, as is written: *Solomon sat upon the throne of YHVH as king* (1 Chronicles 29:23)—ever say *in the days of my futility*? And it is written: *Futility of futilities!—said Koheleth* (Ecclesiastes 1:2).[161]

“And it has been taught: ‘He was called by seven names: Solomon, Jedidiah, Agur, Bin Yake, Ithiel, Lemuel, Koheleth.’ Koheleth equals them all, and all of them are named [39a] as above. קהלת (*Qohelet*), Koheleth—holy assembly of ten. Therefore קהל (*qahal*), a congregation, is not less than ten; and a congregation can even be a hundred. Koheleth—totality of all, as is said: קהלת (*qehillat*), *assembly of, Jacob* (Deuteronomy 33:4).[162]

“And it has been taught: His names denote wisdom; consequently he composed three books: Song of Songs, *Qohelet* (Ecclesiastes), and Proverbs—all parables of wisdom. Song of Songs, corresponding to Love; *Qohelet*, corresponding to Judgment; Proverbs, corresponding to Compassion—in order to perfect wisdom. Everything that he did was done to display wisdom, corresponding to supernal mystery—and he said *in the days of* הבלי (*hevli*), *my futility*; הבל הבלים (*havel havalim*), *futility of futilities*?![163]

“However, the mystery of הבל (*hevel*) is precious! It is *hevel*, breath, issuing from the mouth, and the mystery of breath issuing from the mouth turns into a voice. And it has been taught: ‘The world endures only by the breath of children who have not sinned’—who have literally not sinned. Voice is composed of breath, of air and water; and everything that is made—of breath. The mystery of this breath of children becomes voice, spreading through the world, and they are guardians of the world, guardians of

the city, as is written: *Unless YHVH watches over the city, the watchman guards in vain* (Psalms 127:1).[164]

"Come and see: Breath is voice. What is the difference between them? Breath is voice, potentially poised to generate voice. Genuine voice is fully actualized, not generating another.[165] The breath that he inherited from his father he called *hevli, my breath*, and through it he saw what he saw—although he had many other supports from above—and to reveal the matter, he said *in the days of my breath*, for this came from there. Mystery of the matter: *All is* הבל (*havel*), *breath* (Ecclesiastes 1:2).[166]

"*A righteous one perishes in his righteousness* (Ecclesiastes 7:15)—mystery of the matter, which he revealed and divulged.

"*In the days of my breath*—namely, when this breath sucks from Judgment, in order to execute judgment, *a righteous one perishes in his righteousness*. And when this breath sucks from Compassion, *a wicked one prolongs his life in his evil* (Ecclesiastes 7:15). Both of them depend upon this breath, and therefore it is written: *in the days of*, not *in the day of*. All depends on *the days of* this breath: whoever encounters Judgment, judgment; whoever encounters Compassion, compassion.[167]

"Now, you might say, 'צדיק אובד (*Tsaddiq oved*), *Perishes a righteous one*—it does not say אבוד (*avud*), *is perished*.' So it is: *oved, perishes*, literally! For that Judgment *perishes* the *righteous one* from the world and from the generation. *Prolongs a wicked one—prolongs*, literally! For that Judgment, when sucking from Compassion, generates compassion for that *wicked one* and patiently *prolongs* him."[168]

While they were sitting, they saw an aromatic vapor ascending and descending.[169] He said, "A crowning is crowned on mud of the earth from out of above!" That field wafted a fragrance of all spices. He said, "Let us sit!

Shekhinah is among us. For us is fulfilled the verse: *the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH* (Genesis 27:27)."[170]

He opened, saying, "*He smelled the fragrance of his garments and blessed him and said, 'See, the fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH*' (ibid.). *He smelled the fragrance of his garments*—implying that those garments emitted a sweet aroma ceaselessly. Now one should contemplate! It is written: *the fragrance of his garments*; and it is written: *the fragrance of my son*—it does not say *the fragrance of the garments*, but rather *the fragrance of my son*.[171]

"However, it has been taught: 'As Jacob entered, the Garden of Eden entered with him.'[172] And it has been taught: 'Those garments belonged to Adam—as is written: *YHVH Elohim made coats of skin for Adam and his wife, and He clothed them* (Genesis 3:21)—and he took them out of the Garden of Eden.'[173]

"Now, you might say that it is written: *They sewed fig leaves* (ibid., 7), which were those. But if so, why is it written *YHVH Elohim made*, and *coats of skin*—when they were merely *fig leaves*? Rather, as it is translated: 'garments of glory,' emitting aromas from spices of Eden.[174]

"And it has been taught: 'They were made by a complete name, as is written: *YHVH Elohim made*—by which heaven and earth were not made.' Were they not? Look at what is written: *on the day that YHVH Elohim made earth and heaven* (Genesis 2:4). There is no contradiction. Rather, when they were made, they were not made by a complete name; when they endured, they endured by a complete name.[175]

"Concerning what has been said—that those garments came into the hands of that wicked Esau, who took them from Nimrod—so we have established, but the matter is difficult. If so, look at what is written: *for Adam and his wife* (Genesis 3:21)—garments for Adam and garments for Eve. What happened with Eve's garments? And if so, [39b] in

what were they buried? Would you ever imagine that they left and shed the supernal splendor given to them by the blessed Holy One?[176]

"Rather, those garments worn by Adam and his wife were worn by no other human, for in those garments they resembled the pattern above. Would you ever imagine that they donned them themselves? Come and see what is written: *He clothed them* (Genesis 3:21), for the blessed Holy One clothed them. Happy is their share!

"It is written: *YHVH, my God, You are very great; You are clothed in splendor and majesty* (Psalms 104:1), and similarly: *Splendor and majesty are before Him* (ibid. 96:6), *wrapped in light as in a garment* (ibid. 104:2). Once the clothed was enclothed, He did what He did—namely, the blessed Holy One wrapped Himself in light and created the heavens.[177]

"How can we establish *the precious* [*garments of Esau*], *which were with her in the house* (Genesis 27:15)? *The precious*—royal garments of silk and gold; it is the custom of the world to store them away with spices and scents because of their preciousness.[178]

"Come and see: *He smelled the fragrance of his garments* (Genesis 27:27)—at first. Once he perceived, he said, *See, the fragrance of my son* (ibid.), for he knew that the matter inhered in him and that because of him fragrance wafted.[179]

"*Like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH* (ibid.). Now, how did Isaac know *the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH*? There are two elements, and all is one. For it is written: *Isaac went out to meditate in the field* (ibid. 24:63). Now, didn't he have a house or a place to pray? Well, that field was the one that Abraham bought near the cave, as is written: *the field that Abraham bought* (ibid. 25:10). And when Isaac entered it, he saw *Shekhinah* over it, and it wafted sublime holy fragrances; therefore, he used to pray there

and he designated it for prayer. As for Abraham, why he didn't he pray there? Because he had a set place before.[180]

"The other element: the fragrance that he perceived on Mount Moriah. Why was it called מוריה (*Moriyyah*), Moriah? Because of the fine מר (*mor*), myrrh. All was present—and the Garden of Eden, entering with him; so he blessed him. Therefore, he did not attribute the matter to the garments, but rather to Jacob himself, since he saw that the matter inhered in him and that he deserved to be blessed."[181]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "The Torah should have been written beginning with החדש הזה (*ha-ḥodesh ha-zeh*), *This month, is for you head of months* (Exodus 12:2). Why? Because that was the beginning of the moon; so the Torah should been written beginning here, since the matter is linked with the blessed Holy One.[182]

"The fact that it is not written זאת החדש (*zot ha-ḥodesh*), *This is the month*, poses no difficulty, for זה (*zeh*) and זאת (*zot*) are linked as one, and wherever male and female are as one, praise belongs only to the male. Therefore, הוא (*hu*), *he, is the first for you of the months of the year* (ibid.)—surely!"[183]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "*For you, for you*, twice; why?"[184]

Rabbi Yitsḥak replied, "From both of them is implied more, as is written: *For YHVH's share is His people* (Deuteronomy 32:9)—this bond is *for you*, not for other nations."[185]

Speak to all the community of Israel, saying, "On the tenth of this month, let every man take a lamb for a father's house, a lamb for a household" (Exodus 12:3).

On the tenth—why *on the tenth*? Rabbi Abba said, "When Jubilee illumines the moon, as is written of Jubilee: *On the tenth of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement* (Leviticus 23:27).[186]

"*Let every man take a lamb for a father's house*. Why? Because at this time it had to be pulled; for we have learned that by this act a lower crown is grasped, to which are attached all other lower crowns. Therefore Moses said explicitly, *Pull and take yourselves a sheep* (Exodus 12:21)—as is written: *sheep and male and female slaves* (Genesis 32:6). The blessed Holy One said, 'Perform an action below, and I will smash their power above. Just as you perform with fire—as is written: *but fire-roasted* (Exodus 12:9)—so will I.'"[187]

Why was it pulled on the tenth and slaughtered on the fourteenth?

Rabbi Abba said, "By this the people of Israel were bound for four hundred years. And even though they were not enslaved for four hundred years, since they were intended to be bound by this, it was considered as if they were enslaved all four hundred years. Therefore they detained it for four days, bound in Israel's possession, and afterward: *The whole congregation of the community of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight* (Exodus 12:6).[188]

"Why *at twilight*? The time when Judgment impends, and the time when this matter was handed over [40a] to him through Abraham, as is written: *As the sun was about to set, a deep slumber fell upon Abram—and here, terror and great darkness falling upon him* (Genesis 15:12). *Terror*—one crown; *darkness*—another crown; *great*—the greatest of all. Although we have established this verse in reference to the other subjugations of Israel, it is all.[189]

"Similarly, *Wiping out, I will wipe out* (Exodus 17:14)—you below, and I above.[190]

"It has been taught: Israel did not leave Egypt until all those rulers above were severed from their links and Israel left their dominion, entering the holy supernal dominion of the blessed Holy One and becoming bound to Him, as is written: *For Mine are the Children of Israel as servants, they are My servants* (Leviticus 25:55). Why are they *My*

servants? Because: *whom I brought out of the land of Egypt* (ibid.)—for I took them out of another domain and brought them into Mine.[191]

"This corresponds to a secret spoken by Rabbi Shim'on: 'Why is it written *Surely on the first day you shall remove* שאור (*se'or*), *leaven, from your houses, for whoever eats* מחמצת (*maḥmetset*), *what is leavened* (Exodus 12:15)? Well, so I have established: This *se'or, leaven*, and this *maḥmetset, what is leavened*, are a single rung; all of them a single other dominion—those rulers appointed over other nations. We call them Evil Impulse, Other Dominion, Alien God, Other Gods. Here too, *se'or, leaven*; *maḥmetset, what is leavened*; חמץ (*ḥamets*), *leavened stuff*—all is one. The blessed Holy One said, 'All these years you have been under alien dominion, slaves to another people. From now on, you are free! *Surely on the first day you shall remove se'or, leaven, from your houses* (ibid.); *nothing maḥmetset, that is leavened, shall you eat* (ibid., 20); *no ḥamets, leavened stuff, shall be seen in your possession* (ibid. 13:7).'"[192]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "If so, all days of the year too! Why seven days, as is written: *Seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses* (Exodus 12:19)—*seven days* and no more?"[193]

He replied, "Whenever a person is obligated to show himself free, this is necessary; whenever he is not obligated, it is unnecessary. This can be compared to a king who appointed a person as a royal official. All those days that he ascended to this rank, he rejoiced and wore glorious garments; afterward, he did not need to. The following year, he observed those days on which he rose to this honor and he wore those clothes, and likewise each and every year. Similarly with Israel, it is written: *Seven days no leaven shall be found*—for those are days of joy, days on which they rose to glory and went forth from alien bondage, entering a holy domain. Therefore each and every year they observe those days on which they ascended to this honor; so it is

written: *Seven days shall you eat* מצות (*matstsot*), *unleavened bread* (Exodus 12:15).”[194]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “It is spelled מצת (*matstsat*), as is said: מראת (*mar’at*), *a vision of, God* (Ezekiel 1:1). Why is it called *matstsat*? Judgment, Holy Judgment, Judgment joined to the Holy Name—Judgment that was not powerful all that time among Israel, because the moon was in a deficient state.[195] Consequently, it is written: *bread of poverty* (Deuteronomy 16:3).[196] Why was she deficient? Because the holy sign had not been uncovered, had not been revealed. They were circumcised but not uncovered. When were they uncovered? At the time when it is written *There He set him statute and law, and there He tested him* (Exodus 15:25). And although we have established this verse as referring to another matter, it was all and the matter is fine.[197]

“Now, you might say, ‘They were uncovered in the days of Joshua!’ But not these, rather those of whom is written *all the people born in the wilderness on the way* (Joshua 5:5).[198] After they were uncovered, the blessed Holy One said, ‘At first, you ate *matstsot*, unleavened bread, because the moon was in a deficient state and she was called *bread of poverty*. From now on, this bread will be from another place!’ Which is that? As is written: *Look, I am about to rain down bread for you from heaven* (Exodus 16:4)—not from the moon, as previously, but *from heaven*, really, as is written: *May God give you of the dew of heaven* (Genesis 27:28).[199]

“The holy People of Israel observe those days on which they entered under the wings of *Shekhinah*, and they keep that bread that issues from Her aspect. Of this is written *The Festival of Matstsot, Unleavened Bread, you shall keep* (Exodus 23:15); *You shall keep the matstsot* (ibid. 12:17). What does this mean: *you shall keep the matstsot*? As is said: *Keep My covenant* (Exodus 19:5). All ascends and adheres to a single rung.[200]

“Now, you might ask, ‘How could Moses not have uncovered them?’ Well, in order that Israel would not be delayed there until they had healed. Therefore it is written: *Seven days you shall eat with it matstsot, unleavened bread, bread of poverty* (Deuteronomy 16:3). Why *bread of* [40b] *poverty*? Because *in haste you went out*… (ibid.), and it is written: *They could not tarry* (Exodus 12:39).[201]

“Come and see: When Israel entered the Land, they entered circumcised and uncovered. What is written? *Where you will eat bread without scarcity* (Deuteronomy 8:9). What is *scarcity*? *Bread of poverty*. Why is it called *bread of poverty*? Because the moon was in a deficient state, not blessed by the sun nor illumined by the sun, as is said: *Yes,* כל (*khol*), *all, that is in heaven and on earth* (1 Chronicles 29:11), and she was not illumined by *all*. Why? Because they were not uncovered. But here, since the people of Israel were circumcised and uncovered, it is written: *You will not lack* כל (*kol*), *all, in her* (Deuteronomy, ibid.). So, *where you will eat bread without scarcity*. Why? Because *you will not lack kol, all, in her*—as you lacked in Egypt.[202]

“Every single year Israel actualizes the memory of Egypt by eating—this has never been eliminated from generation to generation.[203] Because they were not uncovered here in Egypt, they lacked this *kol, all*, and the moon was deficient and called *bread of poverty—scarcity*. As for their eating it there in the Land, this was in remembrance of Egypt, and so it will be for generations and generations. And of the time to come, it is written: *Never again will your sun set, and your moon will not be withdrawn* (Isaiah 60:20).”[204]

It has been taught: Rabbi Yose said, “It is written: *On the tenth of this month* (Exodus 12:3), and it is written: *Yet on the tenth of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement* (Leviticus 23:27)—implying what has been said, for it is written: *on the tenth of this month*. What is the point? Well,

on the tenth—this matter depends *on the tenth*. לחדש הזה (*La-ḥodesh ha-zeh*), *Of this month*—the verse should read בחדש הזה (*ba-ḥodesh ha-zeh*), *on this month*. However, when conduct comes to this rung, it is written: *la-ḥodesh ha-zeh, to this month—to this month*, precisely![205]

"*Let every man take a lamb for a father's house, a lamb for a household* (Exodus 12:3). For it has been taught: There are three knots, triple knots, to which all others are bound, as above. And to this one called *sheep*, all is bound—all is included in *sheep*. *Sheep* is bound to *sheep*, unable to detach itself from its knots; to this, all were bound. Therefore it is written: *It shall be kept by you until the fourteenth* (Exodus 12:6)—bind it with a knot, let it be handed over to you until you slaughter it, executing judgment upon it.[206] And of the time to come, it is written *For YHVH has a slaughter in Bozrah* (Isaiah 34:6), and similarly: *Who is this coming from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah?* (Isaiah 63:1). And it is written: *YHVH will be king over all the earth; on that day YHVH will be one and His name One* (Zechariah 14:9)."[207] [44a]

פרשת בשלח

Parashat Be-Shallaḥ

“WHEN HE SENT OFF” (EXODUS 13:17–17:16)

Rabbi Shim’on opened, *“A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet. On* שגיונות (*shigyonot*) (Habakkuk 3:1).[1] This verse is difficult and should be contemplated. Why this difference: *A prayer of Habakkuk*—beyond other prophets of the world, of whom is not written *A prayer of Isaiah the prophet, A prayer of Jeremiah,* or *of Ezekiel, of Hosea,* or of other prophets of the world?[2]

“Well, we have learned as follows: Elisha attained in this world what no other prophet attained, except for Moses. Even so, he did not wish to trouble his Lord.[3] What is written? *One day Elisha was passing through Shunem, where a great woman lived* (2 Kings 4:8). What is *a great woman*? Great in her deeds, for all members of her generation took pride in her. She was mistress of the house, and since her husband was not present in the house to be the master, he is not mentioned, rather she.[4]

“Further, *where a great woman lived*—greater than other women of the world. For other women, upon seeing a guest in the house, are distressed, especially about spending money on him; but this one delighted in guests, especially in Elisha. Therefore, Scripture praises her.[5]

“*She said to her husband, ‘Behold, I know that he is a holy man of God’* (2 Kings 4:9). How did she know? Well, the Companions have established that she threw a white sheet

on the bed and never saw on it a seminal emission, and a fly never passed his table.[6]

"Now, this matter is difficult. If you say that she didn't see a seminal emission, look, there are many such people in the world. What is so different here? And if you say that a fly didn't pass his table, then why is it written *Behold, I know*? Did she know and no one else? Surely, all those who saw him eating would have known![7]

"However, they have spoken well! She knew and no one else, because she arranged his bed when he lay down at night and when he rose in the morning. As for their saying that she threw a sheet on his bed, so it was and thereby she knew. According to the way of the world, when a person rises from bed, the sheet that he slept in emits a repulsive odor; but here, when she gathered that sheet from his bed, it emitted fragrance like the fragrances of the Garden of Eden. She said, 'If the holiness of his Lord were not upon him, he would not be emitting such holy fragrance. So he should withdraw from the house, because in a house a person cannot be so careful. However, *Let us make a small walled upper chamber and place a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp there for him* (2 Kings 4:10).' Why these four? Well, because they are the array of Assembly of Israel, and so it is called.[8]

"*A bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp*—these do not match the order of usage; for look, first you need a chair, then a table, then a lamp, and then a bed! Why did she place a bed first? Because to her that was most precious of all, and a person puts first only what is most precious.[9]

"*One day he came there* (2 Kings 4:11). Which day was this? Well, as they have established: This day was the holiday of Rosh Hashanah, on which the barren of the world were remembered and on which inhabitants of the world are called to account.[10]

"He called to her, saying, *You have gone to all this trouble for us*... (2 Kings 4:13)—for your sake, today I must

inspect the judgments of the world, for on this day the blessed Holy One judges [44b] the world, and since I secluded myself in this place, I must ponder the turmoil of the world.

"*What can be done for you? Can a word be spoken on your behalf to the king?* (ibid.). Now, why is this statement relevant for a woman, who does not go out or enter the king's palace? However, the day was decisive, for all inhabitants of the world sit awaiting judgment, and during that time the blessed Holy One is called King of Justice. He said to her, 'Perhaps you are in need of the supernal King for deeds of yours?'[11]

"*She replied, 'Among my own people I dwell*' (2 Kings 4:13). What was she saying? Well, when Judgment impends upon the world, a person should not separate himself, thereby being designated above and noticed on his own. For at other times when Judgment impends over the world, those who are noticed and designated—even if they are virtuous—are seized first of all. Therefore, a person should not separate from the people; for the compassion of the blessed Holy One rests upon the entire people as one, so a person should never separate from the people. This is why she said *'Among my own people I dwell*—and I do not want to separate from them, as I have acted until today.'[12]

"*Gehazi said, 'But she has no son, and her husband is old'* (2 Kings 4:14).[13] Elisha said, 'Surely the time is auspicious, for the day is decisive.' *He said, 'At this season, in the time of life, you will be embracing a son*' (ibid., 16). *The woman conceived and bore a son* למועד הזה (*la-mo'ed ha-zeh*), *at this season*… (ibid., 17)—*la-mo'ed, at the festival*, literally![14]

"Later, he died. Why did he die? Because he was given to her and not to her husband; he was linked to the site of the female, and whoever is linked to the female is befallen by death. To her he was given, as is written: *you will be embracing a son*.[15]

“Come and see: Of Abraham is written *I will surely return to you in the time of life* (Genesis 18:10)—*to you*, precisely: to you he is linked, not to the female; *to you*, not *to her*. Whoever derives from the side of the female—death awaits his every step.[16]

“*She laid him on the bed of the man of God* (2 Kings 4:21)—because there she had seen the highest holiness of all.[17]

“*Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is your child all right?* (ibid., 26). From here we know that she was the mainstay of the house. Furthermore, she went to him.[18]

“*The man of God said, ‘Leave her alone’* (ibid., 27). Why the difference: here, *the man of God*—and when he is in the city, *Elisha*? Well, surely, *the man of God,* because here was his place, not in the city or when the sons of the prophets were in his presence.[19]

“*YHVH has hidden it from me and has not told me* (ibid.). Why didn’t Elisha know? Because the blessed Holy One said, ‘I am about to kill this one. If I tell him, he will not die, for this was his prophecy! Yet surely he should die.’ As has been said: *You will be embracing a son* (ibid., 16)—being from the site of the female causes death. Therefore He did not tell him.[20]

“*He said to Gehazi, ‘Gird your loins, and take my staff in your hand, and go’* (ibid., 29). As they have established, the miracle vanished from him.[21]

“*As YHVH lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!* (ibid., 30). Why, since Gehazi was already going? Because she knew his ways; he was not worthy for a miracle to happen through him.[22]

“*He placed his mouth upon his mouth…* (ibid., 34). Why? Well, Elisha perceived and knew that this place, to which he was now linked, was the cause. *He placed his mouth upon his mouth*—to link him to another, high place, a place where life is found. He could not uproot him from the place to which he was originally linked; rather, he aroused

another spirit above, which joined this place, and his soul was restored. Otherwise, he would never have risen.[23]

"*The boy sneezed seven times* (ibid., 35)—ascending no farther, as is said: *The days of our lives are seventy years* (Psalms 90:10).[24]

"This was the prophet חבקוק (*Ḥavaqquq*), Habakkuk, as is said: *You* חובקת (*ḥoveqet*), *will be embracing, a son* (2 Kings 4:16). If so, he should have been called חבוק (*Ḥavuq*), Embraced. Why *Ḥavaqquq*? Two: one [45a] by his mother and one by Elisha, who embraced him. There were two חבוקין (*ḥibbuqin*), embraces, on this side and on that. One embrace—that place on which he depended at first. Another embrace, raising him to higher rungs. Therefore, *Ḥavaqquq*—two.[25]

"*A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet* (Habakkuk 3:1). Why תפלה (*tefillah*), *a prayer*? Well, this is the place to which he was originally bound; this is *tefillah,* phylactery, of the hand.[26]

"*On* שגיונות (*shigyonot*) (ibid.)—for on that day on which he was bound to it, the 'mistakes' of the world were dangling before the blessed Holy One, and *Gevurah* prevailed. Consequently, this *tefillah* was bound to him.[27]

"Alternatively, *A prayer of Habakkuk*—a prayer for Habakkuk, which he composed for himself.

"*YHVH, I have heard of Your renown; I am afraid* (Habakkuk 3:2). Come and see: When the spirit of prophecy aroused upon him, it came upon this place of *prayer*, and he feared and trembled. As the saying goes, 'One who has been bitten by a dog trembles from his bark.'[28]

"*YHVH, Your deed, in the midst of years revive it* (ibid.). Who is *Your deed*? He said this of himself, being His *deed. In the midst of years revive it*—give life to *Your deed in the midst of* supernal *years*. *Revive him*—so that he will not die as previously.[29]

"*On* שגיונות (*shigyonot*). Why *shigyonot*? The verse should read שגיאות (*shegi'ot*), *errors*, as is said: *Who can discern*

shegi'ot, errors? (Psalms 19:13). Well, it is all; but *shigyonot*, as is said: שגיון (*shiggayon*), *of David* (Psalms 7:1). Instruments of praise lay before the prophets to induce a spirit of prophecy, as is said: *You will find a band of prophets prophesying, preceded by tambourine and flute…* (1 Samuel 10:5), and similarly: *Now bring me a minstrel…* (2 Kings 3:15). Especially Habakkuk, who—more than all of them—needed calming of spirit, to assuage him and to sweeten that place, to draw upon himself the spirit of prophecy. Similarly with all the prophets, except for Moses, who transcended all other prophets of the world. Happy is his share![30]

"Come and see: When Israel went out of Egypt, their spirit was broken within, and they could not rejoice. When all those legions and chariots accompanied *Shekhinah*, they raised praises and songs before the blessed Holy One; and He aroused the spirits of Israel, so they heard those praises, and their spirits endured within them, not flying away.[31]

"When a person leaves his labor, he realizes the brokenness of his bones, the brokenness of his spirit. Thus when Israel went out of Egypt, they tasted the taste of death, and the blessed Holy One healed them, as is written: *YHVH was going before them by day* (Exodus 13:21). Every way emitted healing fragrance, which entered them, and they were healed. Hearing the sound of praises, they rejoiced and their spirits calmed.[32]

"Pharaoh and all his legions followed them to escort them until they left the land of Egypt. Likewise, all those princes appointed over them and over the other nations escorted *Shekhinah* and all of Israel until they encamped at Etham at the edge of the wilderness, as is written: *It happened when Pharaoh sent the people off* (Exodus 13:17).[33]

"*God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, because it was close* (ibid.)—that oath administered by Abimelech to the patriarchs for the

goodness rendered to them by the Philistines, as is written: *Like the kindness that I have done you, so you shall do for me, and for the land in which you have sojourned* (Genesis 21:23).[34]

"What is written above? *Pharaoh rose at night, he and all his servants…* (Exodus 12:30).[35] Come and see the supreme vengeance that the blessed Holy One wreaked upon Egypt! There were three fatal plagues. One: the firstborn passed through Egypt and killed whomever they found.[36] Another, when the blessed Holy One killed at midnight. Another, when Pharaoh saw the plague in his house, among his sons and servants, he rose and armed himself and killed the commanders, officers, and all those who had advised him to refuse the people—until the Torah testified against him that he rose at night, precisely! Just as Night killed and wreaked vengeance, so Pharaoh rose in the land of Egypt, killing and wreaking vengeance upon his officers, commanders, supervisors, and upon all those nobles, [45b] as is written: *Pharaoh rose at night—night*, precisely!—to kill and destroy.[37]

"It is the nature of a dog that when he is struck with a stone, he goes and bites another dog. Similarly, Pharaoh.[38] Afterward, he went into the streets and cried out, '*Rise, go out from among my people!* You have killed all the inhabitants of the city, you have killed my officers and commanders and all the members of my household!' As is written: *He called to Moses and to Aaron,* 'לילה (*Lailah*), *Night!* (Exodus 12:31)—because everything happened through your power—*Bless me too!* (ibid., 32), don't kill me!' Afterward, he himself escorted them and took them out of the country, as is written: *It happened when Pharaoh sent the people off* (Exodus 13:17)."[39]

God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea (Exodus 13:18)—to pave the way to His place.[40]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Why this difference? When Israel was in Egypt, it is written: *Let My people go* (Exodus 5:1); *For if you refuse to let My people go* (ibid. 10:4); *My son, My firstborn, is Israel* (ibid. 4:22)—yet at that time, they were not circumcised, not fittingly bound to Him. Whereas here, when they were circumcised and had offered the Paschal Lamb, binding themselves to Him, they are called *the people*.[41]

“Well, because of that mixed multitude that clung to them and mingled with them, they are called *the people*—unidentified. This corresponds to what is written: *YHVH struck the people* [*for having made the calf*] (Exodus 32:35); *The people assembled against Aaron; the people saw that Moses lagged* (ibid., 1)—and similarly all of them.”[42]

Rabbi Yitsḥak and Rabbi Yehudah were traveling to Usha, accompanied by Yose the caravanner[43] with a string of camels,[44] burdens wrapped in their blankets.[45] As they were traveling, that Yose the caravanner discovered a certain woman of the other nations who was bundling vegetables of the field. He slipped away from them, seized her, and mounted her.[46]

Rabbi Yitsḥak and Rabbi Yehudah were stunned. They said, “Surely, let us turn back from the way; for look, the blessed Holy One wants to show us that we should not associate with him!” They turned back from the way. They investigated him and found that he was the son of a Gentile woman and his father was of blemished seed.[47] They said, “Blessed is the Compassionate One, who saved us!”

Rabbi Yitsḥak opened, saying, *“Of David. Do not be vexed* במרעים (*ba-mere’im*), *by evildoers…* (Psalms 37:1). Who are those *mere’im*, *evildoers*? For look, it is not written חטאים (*ḥata’im*), sinners, or רשעים (*resha’im*), wicked ones, but rather *mere’im*, *evildoers*—who bring evil upon themselves and upon others who associate with them.”[48]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "*Mere'im, Evildoers*—stay far away from *mere'im*, so that you do not become רעים (*re'im*), friends, and companions, so that his actions do not harm you and you are caught in his sin.

"Come and see: Were it not for that mixed multitude who joined Israel, that deed would not have been perpetrated and all those Israelites would not have died and all that was inflicted upon Israel would not have come about.[49]

"Come and see: That deed and that very sin caused Israel's exile. For we have learned: At that time the blessed Holy One wanted Israel to become like supernal angels; He wanted to make them free from everything, and free from foreign subjugation by other nations, as is said: חרות (*ḥarut*), *engraved, upon the tablets* (Exodus 32:16)—do not read חרות (*ḥarut*), *engraved*, but rather חירות (*ḥeirut*), *freedom.* As soon as that deed was done, they provoked everything—causing death, causing subjugation to empires, causing those original tablets to be smashed, causing many thousands of Israelites to die. All this on account of the conjunction of that mixed multitude, who joined with them.[50]

"Here too, because of them, they were not called 'Israel' or 'the Children of Israel' or 'My people,' but rather *the people*—unidentified. Now, you might say, *'The Children of Israel went up armed from the land of Egypt* (Exodus 13:18)!' Well, when they went up, and that mixed multitude had not yet joined them; but as soon as they joined them, they were called *the people*."[51]

Rabbi Yose objected, saying, "It is written: *For as you see the Egyptians today, you will not see them again forever* (Exodus 14:13). But look, every day they saw that mixed multitude!"[52]

Rabbi Yehudah replied, "It is written: *a mixed multitude* (ibid. 12:38), not *Egyptians*, for many other nationalities were living in Egypt. Furthermore, they had all been

circumcised, and since they were circumcised, they were not called Egyptians. On the authority of Moses, they were accepted—corresponding to what [46a] is said: *Go, get down! For your people that you brought up from the land of Egypt has acted corruptly…* (Exodus 32:7)."[53]

The Children of Israel went up המשים (*ḥamushim*), *armed* (ibid. 13:18)—they were one out of חמשה (*ḥamishah*), five.

Rabbi Yose said, "Five of Israel and one of them."

Rabbi Yehudah said, "One out of חמשין (*ḥamishin*), fifty."[54]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "חמשים (*Ḥamushim*)—through that Jubilee He brought them up from Egypt; through חמשים (*ḥamishim*), fifty, *the Children of Israel went up from Egypt*. Otherwise, they would not have gone up. Therefore, they tarried fifty days to receive the Torah, and from that site Torah issued and was given. So, חמשים (*ḥamushim*)—spelled deficiently, for through this *the Children of Israel went up from Egypt.*"[55]

Moses took the bones of Joseph with him (Exodus 13:19). Why did he take up his bones? Because he was the first to descend into exile. Furthermore, he possessed a sign of redemption and had made Israel swear regarding this, as is written: *for he had solemnly made the children of Israel swear…* (ibid.), as has been said.[56]

YHVH was going before them by day… (Exodus 13:21).[57]

Rabbi Yose opened, "*For the leader. On the doe of dawn. A song of David* (Psalms 22:1). How dear is Torah to the blessed Holy One! For whoever engages in Torah is beloved above, beloved below; the blessed Holy One listens to his words and never forsakes him in the world.

"Torah should be studied day and night, as is written: *Meditate on it day and night* (Joshua 1:8), and similarly: *Were it not for My covenant day and night…* (Jeremiah 33:25).[58] Granted, by day; why by night? So that the

complete Holy Name will be present with him. Just as there is no day without night, and one is incomplete without the other, so Torah must accompany a person day and night, so that completeness will be with him.[59]

"As has been said, the essence of night is from midnight on, although the first half also belongs to night. Yet, at midnight the blessed Holy One enters the Garden of Eden to delight with the righteous, and it is then that a person should rise and study Torah. As has been said, the blessed Holy One and all the righteous in the Garden of Eden listen to his voice, as is written: *You who dwell in the gardens, companions listen for your voice; let me hear!* (Song of Songs 8:13). As they have established, *You who dwell in the gardens*—Assembly of Israel, who praises the blessed Holy One in the night. Happy is the share of one who joins Her in praising the blessed Holy One with Torah, with praise of Torah![60]

"As morning approaches, Assembly of Israel comes and converses with the blessed Holy One, and He extends to Her a scepter of love—not over Her alone but over Her and over all those participating with Her, as has been said: *By day YHVH directs His love, in the night His song is with me* (Psalms 42:9). Therefore She is called *doe of dawn.*"[61]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "As morning is about to lighten, light darkens and blackens; blackness prevails. Then a woman unites with her husband, conversing with him, entering his palace. Later, when the sun is about to set, it brightens, and night comes and absorbs it. Then all gates are closed, donkeys tremble, and dogs bark. When night is split, the King begins to rise and *Matronita* to sing; the King comes and knocks on the gate of the palace, saying, *Open to me, my sister, my love!*… (Song of Songs 5:2). Then He delights with the souls of the righteous.[62]

"Happy is the share of one who awakens at that time with words of Torah! For all those in the palace of *Matronita* should praise the King, and they all offer praise before Him;

and the praise ascending from this world, which is so far away, is the most pleasing of all to the blessed Holy One.[63]

"As night withdraws and morning approaches—darkening, blackening—the King and *Matronita* dwell in secrecy, and He gives Her presents for all those in the palace. Happy is the share of one who is counted among them!"[64]

And YHVH was going before them by day (Exodus 13:21). *And YHVH*—the blessed Holy One and His court.[65] [46b] Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "This corresponds to what we have learned: '*Shekhinah* journeyed along with the patriarchs.' *Was going before them by day*—Abraham.

"In a column of cloud—Isaac.

"To lead them on the way—Jacob, of whom is written *Jacob went on his way, and angels of God encountered him* (Genesis 32:2).

"And by night in a column of fire to give them light—King David.

"All of them, a holy supernal chariot, to guide Israel consummately.[66]

"*So as to go by day and by night*. Now, why did they go *by day and by night*? Let them go by day, and not by night like people fleeing. Since the blessed Holy One was protecting them, why did they go by day and by night? Well, so that consummation of all would appear in them, for consummation demands both day and night."[67]

Rabbi Abba said, "Happy is the share of Israel, for the blessed Holy One brought them out of Egypt so that they would be His inherited share! Come and see: From the aspect of Jubilee, freedom appeared for Israel. Similarly in the time to come, as is written: *On that day a great shofar will be blown…* (Isaiah 27:13). Because of that Jubilee, fifty days elapsed for receiving Torah and approaching Mount Sinai. Since they went by day, they went by night, so that all

would be one day, inseparable. Furthermore, they were all moving tranquilly, in their souls' delight.[68]

"On the day that Torah was given to them, fifty days were complete, days and nights fittingly—for there is no day without night, no night without day, day and night being called *one day*—corresponding to fifty days of Jubilee.[69] Once those fifty days of Jubilee rested upon them, from the aspect of Jubilee Torah was given to them. Therefore, they went *by day and by night.*"[70]

And YHVH was going before them by day. Rabbi Abba said, "So they have established: '*By day in a column of cloud* —Abraham. *By night in a column of fire*—Isaac.' If so, where is Jacob? Well, he is mentioned in the first word and there he dwells, as is written: *And YHVH*. And *night* shone on this side and on that."[71]

And Rabbi Abba said, "It is written: *It happened when Isaac was old, that his eyes were too dim to see* (Genesis 27:1). Why? As they have already established: Whoever loves a wicked person, so it is. Come and see: With Isaac night mingled."[72]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "*The king of Egypt was told that the people had fled*… (Exodus 14:5). Who told him? Well, so they have established: His wise men and sorcerers assembled before him and informed him *that the people had fled*.[73] And why did they say this? Well, they saw in their wisdom that they were moving day and night; so they said, 'Surely, they are fleeing!' Furthermore, they saw that they were not taking a straight route, as is written: *Have them turn back and encamp before Pi-hahiroth* (ibid., 2)."[74]

He took six hundred chariots (ibid., 7). Why? Rabbi Yose said, "Corresponding to the number of Israelites, as is written: *about six hundred thousand on foot* (ibid. 12:37).[75]

"*Select* (ibid. 14:7)—corresponding to *the men* (ibid. 12:37), who were essence of all the rest.[76]

“*And all the chariots of Egypt* (ibid. 14:7)—the rest of the chariots, secondary to and behind the others, corresponding to what is written: *besides little ones* (ibid. 12:37). All this he did on the advice of his wise men and sorcerers.[77]

“ושלישים (*Ve-shalishim*), *And teams-of-three, upon them all* (ibid. 14:7)—all in wisdom, corresponding to supernal rungs: two and one.”[78]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “According to its translation: מזרזין (*mezarezin*), armed—they were זריזין (*zerizin*), zealous, in everything.”[79]

He took six hundred chariots. Rabbi Ḥiyya said, *“I will punish the host of the heights on high* [*and the kings of the earth upon the earth*] (Isaiah 24:21). When the blessed Holy One grants dominion to the princes of nations above, He grants it to the nation below; and when He casts them down from their rungs above, He casts down the nation below.[80]

“*He took six hundred select chariots*—their empowered one. As they have established, he led the princes of other nations, all of whom fell later in the camp of Sisera; this corresponds to *select*. Afterward, *and all the chariots of Egypt*.[81]

“It is written: *As a mare among Pharaoh’s chariots, I have made you appear, my beloved* (Song of Songs 1:9)—the image of a mare appeared to Pharaoh’s stallions, as they have established.[82]

“As a mare among Pharaoh’s chariots. [47a] When he was pursuing the Israelites, what did he do? He took mares and harnessed them to his chariots up front, and stallions he harnessed behind them; the males lusted after the females, but the females refused and raced ahead. As he approached the Israelites, he took the females and placed them behind and the stallions in front, to steel themselves against the Israelites and attack them.[83]

"Similarly, *And YHVH was going before them by day* (Exodus 13:21). Afterward, *The angel of Elohim who was going before the camp of Israel moved and went behind them* (ibid. 14:19). So, *I have made you appear, my beloved*. This verse has been established."[84]

Pharaoh הקריב (*hiqriv*), *drew near* (Exodus 14:10).

Rabbi Yose said, "As has been said, he drew them near through repentance. *Pharaoh hiqriv, drew* [them] *near*.[85] It is written: *O YHVH! In distress they sought You, pouring out a whisper when You chastised them* (Isaiah 26:16). *In distress they sought You*—Israel does not seek the blessed Holy One in time of comfort, but rather in time of distress; then they all seek Him.

"*Pouring out a whisper*—they all offer prayers and pleadings, pouring out their prayers. When? *When you chastised them*—when the blessed Holy One punishes them with lashes. Then, He stands over them in compassion, and that voice of theirs pleases Him, in order to requite their enemies; He is filled with compassion for them.[86]

"As we have established, this can be compared to a dove [who was fleeing from a hawk and entered the cleft of a rock, where she found a serpent nesting. She tried to enter but could not, because the serpent was still nesting. Could she turn back? No, because the hawk was poised outside. What did the dove do? She began to cry and clap her wings, so that the owner of the dovecote would hear her and come to save her.] Similarly, Israel approached the sea—they saw the sea swelling in front of them, its waves surging high; they were frightened. Raising their eyes, they saw Pharaoh with his camps and flying stones and catapults; then, *they were very frightened*. What did they do? *The Children of Israel cried out to YHVH* (Exodus 14:10). Who caused Israel to draw near their Father above? Pharaoh! As is written: *Pharaoh hiqriv, drew* [them] *near,* as has been said."[87]

Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and see YHVH's deliverance" (Exodus 14:13).

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "Happy is the generation with a shepherd like Moses walking among them! It is written: *He remembered the days of old—Moses, his people. Where is he who brought them up* [*from the sea*]? (Isaiah 63:11).' *He remembered the days of old*—the blessed Holy One. *Moses, his people*—from here we learn that Moses was equivalent to all of Israel, and we learn that the shepherd of the people is really the whole people. If he is worthy, then all the people are worthy; if he is unworthy, then all the people are unworthy and are punished because of him, as has been established.[88]

"*Stand still and see* (Exodus 14:13)—you need not engage in battle, for the blessed Holy One will wage war for you, as is said: *YHVH will fight for you* (ibid., 14).[89]

"Come and see: That night, the blessed Holy One gathered His Family and sat in judgment over Israel; and if the patriarchs had not hastened to intercede for Israel, they would not have been saved from judgment."[90]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "The merit of Jacob protected Israel, as is written: *Had it not been YHVH who was for us—let Israel now say* (Psalms 124:1)—Israel the Elder."[91]

YHVH will fight for you, and you—keep silent! (Exodus 14:14).

Rabbi Abba opened, "*If you refrain from trampling Sabbath, from engaging in your affairs on My holy day* (Isaiah 58:13).[92] Happy are Israel, for the blessed Holy One desired them, cleaving to them more than to all other nations of the world! Out of His love for them, He drew them near to Him and gave them Torah and gave them Sabbath—holier than all other days, tranquility from all, joy of all. For Sabbath is equivalent to

the whole Torah, and whoever observes Sabbath is considered to have observed the whole Torah.[93]

"And call Sabbath 'delight' (ibid.)—delight of all, of body and soul, delight of those above and below.[94]

"Call Sabbath. What does *call* mean? Invite her, as is said: *callings of holiness* (Leviticus 23:2)—invited, as one invites a guest to his home. So, *Call Sabbath 'delight'*—invite her to a table set fittingly; invite her to a home prepared with food and drink, more than on other days.[95]

"Call Sabbath—while still daylight.[96]

"The holy of YHVH 'honored' (Isaiah, ibid.)—the day, two who are one.[97]

"If you honor it by not going [47b] *your own ways* (ibid.)—as we have established.[98]

"*Pursuing your affairs, or speaking a word* (ibid.)—as has been said, for that word rises and arouses a profane word above. Whoever invites a guest should occupy himself with him and with no one else.

"Come and see: The word that he emits from his mouth rises and arouses an arousal above, either for good or for evil. Whoever sits in Sabbath delight is forbidden to arouse a profane word, for he thereby spoils the holy day. Whoever attends a royal wedding celebration should not neglect the king and turn his attention to someone else. One should always manifest action, arousing a requisite arousal; on Sabbath, one should arouse with affairs of heaven and holiness of the day, not with anything else.[99]

"Come and see: When Pharaoh approached to attack Israel, the blessed Holy One did not want Israel to arouse an arousal below at all, for there was already arousal above, since the patriarchs had initiated arousal above and their merit stood before Him. This arousal had been stimulated, so the blessed Holy One did not want Israel to arouse below at all—for it inhered in a supernal site, as is written: יִלָּחֶם לָכֶם יְהוָה (*YHVH yillaḥem lakhem*), *YHVH will fight for you, and you—keep silent!* (Exodus 14:14). *Keep silent!*—precisely, and do

not arouse, since that is uncalled-for. Here is interwoven a holy name in its token letters, as the Companions have aroused."[100]

Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Yehudah were walking on the way. Rabbi Yose said to Rabbi Yehudah, "We have surely learned: '*YHVH* always signifies Compassion.' And even though He wages war and executes Judgment, that Judgment is with Compassion. Yet here we see: *YHVH will fight for you* (Exodus 14:14), and no Compassion at all appeared in that Judgment, for it is written: *not even one of them remained* (ibid., 28)."[101]

He replied, "This matter I heard from Rabbi Shim'on, who said that even here Judgment is with Compassion. For the sea covered them and they perished, and afterward the waters cast them out. The blessed Holy One wanted to honor them, so they were buried in the earth; the earth refused to accept them until the blessed Holy One stretched out His right hand to her and she received them, as is written: *You stretched out Your right hand—earth swallowed them* (Exodus 15:12). So, there is Judgment with Compassion.[102]

"Therefore, the blessed Holy One did not want Israel to arouse a word in the world; for if Israel aroused a word, they would not arouse the name of Compassion, and Judgment would not be rendered with Compassion—as is written: *YHVH will fight for you, and you—keep silent!* 'Do not arouse anything! For the name of Compassion must be aroused upon them to render Judgment with Compassion; so you should not produce a defect and arouse something else.'"[103]

He said to him, "But look at what is written: *YHVH will go forth and battle those nations, as when He battles on a day of war* (Zechariah 14:3)! *YHVH will go forth and battle*—if so, is that Judgment with Compassion?"[104]

He replied, “Certainly so! Judgment with Compassion, for their death will not be by pestilence. Rather, He will have consideration for them, so that they will not be killed like other inhabitants of the world, but instead gently, without pain—Judgment with Compassion.

“Everywhere this name signifies Judgment with Compassion, except for one place, as is written: *YHVH will go forth like a mighty one; like a warrior He will stir up zeal…* (Isaiah 42:13). *Like a mighty one*—not *a mighty one;* rather, He will change His garments and don other garments. *Like a warrior*—He will change His weapons. Even so, Judgment is extreme but mingled with Compassion, as is written: *like a mighty one,* not *a mighty one; like a warrior,* not *a warrior.* For certainly, even though He executes Judgment, He cares for His handiwork. So, *YHVH will fight for you*—surely! Happy is the share of Israel, for the blessed Holy One has selected them as His share, as is written: *For YHVH’s share is His people, Jacob His allotted inheritance* (Deuteronomy 32:9).”[105]

YHVH said to Moses, “*Why are you crying out to Me?…*” (Exodus 14:15). This statement has been established in the Book of Concealment, and there its secret is found.[106]

Rabbi Yehudah opened, *“Jonah prayed to YHVH his God from the belly of the fish* (Jonah 2:2). What is written above? *YHVH provided a large fish to swallow Jonah…* (ibid., 1). *YHVH provided*—as is said: *The king provided them* [*a daily amount of the royal food and of the wine he drank*] (Daniel 1:5); *he provided* [*your food and your drink*] (ibid., 10). But this verse [48a] should read: *YHVH provided Jonah for the fish,* for he was a provision sent by Him! However, surely that fish was provided for Jonah, to protect him from other fish of the sea, and so that he would be concealed within it.[107]

“Once he was brought inside, Jonah saw in its belly an expanse like an immense temple, with the two eyes of that

fish beaming like the sun. There was a gem in its belly shining upon him, and he saw everything in the sea and in the depths.[108]

"Now, you might ask, 'If so, why is it written: *Out of my straits I called to* YHVH… (Jonah 2:3)? It does not seem that he had all this spacious comfort!' Well, once that fish showed him everything in the sea and in the depths, it died, for it could not endure for three days. Then Jonah felt constricted.[109]

"As Rabbi El'azar said, when Jonah saw all that spacious comfort, he rejoiced. The blessed Holy One said, 'What more do you need? Is it for this that I brought you in here?' What did He do? He killed that fish, and all the fish of the sea circled round that fish—one biting it from this side, another from that side. Then Jonah saw himself in distress; immediately, *Jonah prayed to* YHVH *his God from the belly of* הדגה (*ha-dagah*), *the fish* (Jonah 2:2). At first, דג (*dag*); now, דגה (*dagah*), as is said: *and* הדגה (*ha-dagah*), *the fish, that were in the Nile died* (Exodus 7:21).[110] Then it is written: *Out of my straits I called to* YHVH, *and He answered me* (Jonah 2:3). *Out of my straits I called*—and not *I was in straits,* or *I dwelled in straits,* but rather *I called,* out of that stressful constriction inflicted upon me by the fish of the sea.[111]

"*From the belly of Sheol* (Jonah, ibid.)—for it was dead. He did not say, 'From the belly of a living creature,' or 'From the belly of a fish'; rather, it was surely dead.[112]

"As soon as he offered a prayer, the blessed Holy One accepted it and revived that fish, and it spewed him out onto dry land before the eyes of all, and they saw the act of the blessed Holy One.[113]

"What is written? *Jonah prayed to* YHVH *his God*—to the place to which he was bound, as implied by what is written: יהוה אלהיו (*YHVH Elohav*), YHVH *his God*. It is not written *Jonah prayed to* YHVH—and nothing more—but rather YHVH *his God*.[114]

“Here too, *YHVH said to Moses, ‘Why are you crying out to Me?’* (Exodus 14:15)—to *Me*, precisely![115]

“Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward! (ibid.). *Have them journey*—from proliferating words; now is not the time for prayer![116]

“*Have them journey forward*—now, where was He commanding them to journey? Look, they were camping by the sea! Well, it reverts above, as is written: *Why are you crying out to Me?* For all of them were standing in one place; so, *have them journey forward*—have them journey from here; now is not the time!”[117]

As for you, raise your staff [ונטה (*unteh*), *and stretch out, your hand over the sea and split it*]... (Exodus 14:16). *Raise your staff,* on which is engraved the Holy Name. Bend your hand to one side, and as soon as the waters see the Name, they will flee from it. So, ונטה (*unteh*), *and turn, your hand*—to one side, because the other sides of that staff you will need for other waters.[118]

Rabbi El’azar said, “I see that sometimes this staff is called ‘the staff of *Elohim*’ and sometimes ‘the staff of Moses.’”[119]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “There were two, as has been established. Yet in the Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava he explained well that all is one, whether it is attributed to the blessed Holy One or to Moses.[120] This staff is intended to arouse the side of *Gevurah*. Therefore, *stretch out your hand*—the left one, on the side of *Gevurah*.”[121]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “Woe to those who do not see that Torah is proclaiming in front of them! They do not know and do not care. Come and see: On the side of *Gevurah* waters arouse in the world, waters issue. Now the blessed Holy One wanted to dry up the water. So why *stretch out your hand*—which is the left? Well, *raise your staff,* to dry up the waters; *and stretch out your hand,* to bring the waters back—arousing the side of *Gevurah* and bringing the waters back

on the Egyptians. Therefore, two elements here, as is written: *Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea*.[122]

"*And split it.* But they were abysses! Well, the blessed Holy One performed a miracle within a miracle, as is said: *Abysses congealed in the heart of the sea* (Exodus 15:8), and they walked on dry land in the midst of the water, as is written: *The Children of Israel came into the midst of the sea on dry land* (ibid. 14:22)."[123] [48b]

He removed the wheel of their chariots… (Exodus 14:25).[124]

Rabbi Shim'on opened, "*I saw the living beings, and behold, one wheel on the ground*… (Ezekiel 1:15). This verse has been established and discussed. Come and see: The dominion of the blessed Holy One becomes manifest in all, and His dominion will not pass away forever and ever.[125]

"He generated dominion through the patriarchs. He took Abraham and founded the world upon him, as is written: *These are the generations of heaven and earth* בהבראם (*be-hibbare'am*), *when they were created* (Genesis 2:4), as has been established.[126] He took Isaac and planted the world through him—existing forever, as is written: *My covenant I will establish with Isaac* (ibid. 17:21). He took Jacob and set him before Him, delighting with him, glorying in him, as is written: *Israel in whom I glory* (Isaiah 49:3).[127]

"Come and see: Jacob is joined to the Tree of Life, eternally devoid of death, for all life is consummated in that Tree, and it bestows life upon all those joined to it. Therefore, Jacob did not die.[128] And when did he die? When it was written: *He gathered his feet into the bed* (Genesis 49:33). *The bed*—as is said: *Look, the bed of Solomon!* (Song of Songs 3:7); for of this bed is written *Her feet descend to death* (Proverbs 5:5). So, *He gathered his feet*

into the bed, and then *he expired, and was gathered to his people* (Genesis, ibid.).[129] The blessed Holy One made Jacob consummation of the patriarchs, as is written: *Jacob, whom I have chosen* (Isaiah 41:8).[130]

"This is a supernal, holy living being, to which all other living beings are linked, concatenated to it. Numerous beings upon beings, these ascending, those descending—all rungs within rungs, above and below, swimming along in the sea, as is written: *This sea, vast and broad of reach…* (Psalms 104:25)—those above and below all swimming in the sea.[131]

"When the sea heaves her waves, all ships toss up and down, rage prevails, and a mighty wind overcomes her fiercely. Fish of the sea scatter everywhere—these to the east and those to the west, these to the north and those to the south. When they see a mark on any inhabitants of the world, they seize them and swallow them within sloping caverns in the earth.[132]

"No ships sail from their places, but only toss up and down—except when a certain leader of the sea arrives, who knows how to pacify the raging wind of the sea. As soon as this one straddles the sea, her rage subsides and calm prevails. Then all those ships move in a straight course, deviating neither right or left, as is written: *There ships sail; Leviathan* זה (*zeh*), *whom, You formed to play with* (Psalms 104:26)—*zeh*, precisely![133] All the fish of the sea gather to their place, and all those living beings rejoice, and living beings of the supernal field rejoice over her, as is written: *All beasts of the field play there* (Job 40:20).[134]

"Come and see: As above, so below; as below, so in the sea; as high above, so in the upper sea; as above, so below; as below, so in the lower sea.[135]

"The body of that sea I have already aroused for the Companions: its length and breadth, head, arms, hair of the body—all as it should be, each called by name.

Correspondingly below, for the sea below, so too: head of the sea, arms of the sea, body of the sea.[136]

"It is written: *Zebulun will dwell by the shore of seas…* (Genesis 49:13). But look, there was only one sea in his share! Well, *by the shore of seas*—precisely! And I have established them for the Companions in supernal mystery.

"*And his flank upon Sidon* (ibid.). וירכתו (*Ve-yarkhato*), *And his flank*—as is said: *those issuing from* ירך (*yerekh*), *the thigh of, Jacob* (Exodus 1:5). Zebulun was the right thigh of the body. The Sea of Galilee was in his share, and here is found the snail for purple.[137]

"Come and see: Chariot above chariot! Wheels of a chariot run hastily, and supports of the chariot do not hesitate moving upon them. And so with all of them.[138]

"Come and see! As for the chariot empowered over Egypt, if you say, 'A complete chariot'—not to be found, for look at what is written: *He removed the wheel of their chariots* (Exodus 14:25)! There were so many chariots moving on one supporting wheel, appointed over them. As soon as this one was deprived of its power, all those chariots could not move and all were deprived of their power. Then, all those below were deprived of their power, for look: *upon Egypt and upon those who rely* [49a] *on him* (Jeremiah 46:25)![139]

"At that time the dominion of Egypt prevailed over other nations. As soon as the power of Egypt was crushed, the power of other nations was crushed. How do we know? As is written: *Then the chiefs of Edom were terrified; the dukes of Moab, trembling seized them;* [*all the dwellers of Canaan melted away*]; and similarly: *Peoples heard, they quaked; writhing seized* [*the dwellers of Philistia*] (Exodus 15:14–15). For they were all attached to Egyptian worship and dependent upon Egypt for their support; at that time they all sought the assistance of Egypt, to be reinforced. So, when they heard of the mighty acts that the blessed Holy

One performed in Egypt, their hands hung limp, they could not stand, and they were all jolted out of their power.[140]

"Surely, once their power was broken above, the power of all those linked to her was broken. Once the power of all of them was broken, all these below were broken, because of that power broken at first. Therefore, *He removed the wheel of their chariots,* and it is written: *causing them to drive with difficulty* (Exodus 14:25)—for once this was broken, they could not move.[141]

"Come and see it is so! For it is not written *He removed the wheels of his chariots,* or *the wheel of his chariot,* but rather *the wheel of his chariots*—called so because of this one to which all of them were joined.[142]

"Further, *He removed the wheel of his chariots.* Come and see: Happy is the share of Israel, for the blessed Holy One delights in them—to cleave to Him, to be His share, as is written: *To Him shall you cleave* (Deuteronomy 13:5), and similarly: *You, cleaving to YHVH your God* (ibid. 4:4).[143] And it is written: *For Yah has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel as His own treasure* (Psalms 135:4), and similarly: *For YHVH's share is His people, Jacob His allotted inheritance* (Deuteronomy 32:9).[144] For He generated them from holy seed to become His share, and therefore gave them the supernal Torah—treasured away for two thousand years before the world was created, as has been said. Out of His love, He gave it to Israel—to follow Him and cleave to Him.[145]

"Come and see: All the camps above and all those chariots are linked with one another, rungs to rungs, these higher and those lower, as they have established: *This sea, vast and broad of reach*… (Psalms 104:25). Above them, a holy living being, and all those legions and camps move under Her control: at Her command they journey and at Her command they encamp. When She journeys, they journey, for they are all joined to Her.[146]

“Come and see: When the blessed Holy One wanted to remove Pharaoh’s multitude of troops below, He first removed their power, as has been established. What did He do? He removed and withdrew that supernal holy site that directed all those chariots. As soon as this was withdrawn, all those camps could not proceed. Once they could not, that prince of Egypt was deprived of his dominion and passed through blazing fire; then the dominion of Egypt was eliminated.”[147]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “As Israel approached the sea, the blessed Holy One summoned the prince empowered over the sea, and said to him, ‘When I created the world, I appointed you over the sea; yet I made a condition with the sea that it would split its waters for My children. Now the time has come for My children to pass through the sea…’ Afterward, what is written? *Toward morning the sea returned* לאיתנו (*le-eitano*), *to its powerful flow* (Exodus 14:27)—as they have established: לתנאו (*litna’o*), to its condition, that it had with the blessed Holy One when He created the world.[148]

“Israel was camped by the sea, and they saw its waves rising and falling. Lifting their eyes, they saw Pharaoh and his multitude of troops—they were frightened and cried out, as has been said.[149]

“What did the sea see? It saw the coffin of Joseph and fled from it. Why? Because it is written: *He fled, escaping outside* (Genesis 39:12)—therefore, *The sea saw and fled* (Psalms 114:3).[150]

“It is written: *He removed the wheel of his chariots… and Egypt said, ‘Let me flee from before Israel!’* (Exodus 14:25). Why? Because they saw the land of Egypt as if it were burning with fire. So they said, *Let me flee from before Israel, for YHVH is fighting for them against Egypt!*”[151]

Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Yose were walking in the desert. Rabbi Ḥiyya said to Rabbi Yose, “Let me tell you: When the blessed Holy One wishes to remove a dominion on earth, He does not do so until He removes its dominion in heaven. And He does not remove its dominion until He appoints another in its place, so that dominion will not be diminished [49b] in heaven—fulfilling what is written: *He gives it to whomever He wishes* (Daniel 4:14).”[152]

Rabbi Yose said, “Certainly so!”

Rabbi Yose opened, saying, *“YHVH our Lord, how majestic is Your name throughout the earth!* אשר תנה (*Asher tenah*), *You have set, Your splendor above the heavens!* (Psalms 8:2).[153] When the blessed Holy One wishes to smash the power of other nations, He intensifies His Judgment over them, breaks them, and eliminates their dominion in His presence.[154]

“אשר תנה (*Asher tenah*). The verse should read אשר נתת (*asher natatta*), *who have set*—or תנה (*tenah*), *set, Your splendor.* Why *asher tenah*—*who, set*—*Your splendor*?[155] Well, this is mystery of the deepest river of all, and David offered his prayer to draw from it *upon the heavens.* This is *asher, who,* as is said: אהיה אשר אהיה (*ehyeh asher ehyeh*), *I will be who I will be* (Exodus 3:14).[156]

“When this deepest river of all flows forth, all is in joy. *Matronita* is crowned by the King, all worlds are joyous, and dominion of other nations is eliminated in the presence of *Matronita*. Then all who are linked to Her raise their heads.”[157]

Meanwhile, they saw a man approaching with a load in front of him.[158] Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “Let’s go! Maybe this man is a Gentile or an ignoramus, and it is forbidden to join him on the way.”[159]

Rabbi Yose said, “Let’s sit here and see. Maybe he is a great man.”[160]

Meanwhile, he passed before them. He said to them, “In roughness of crossing, the cluster of this companionship is

essential! I know another way, so let's turn off this one.[161] I must tell you, so that I won't be guilty for what happens to you, and so that I don't transgress what is written: *Before the blind you shall not place a stumbling block* (Leviticus 19:14)—for you are like blind men on the road and you shouldn't risk your lives!"[162]

Rabbi Yose said, "Blessed is the Compassionate One, that we waited here!"

They joined him. He said to them, "Don't speak at all now until we pass this place." They turned aside onto another way.

After they left that place, he said to them, "On that other way, a certain wise priest and an ignoramus were once walking. He attacked him at that spot and killed him. Ever since that day, whoever passes that place risks his life—mountain robbers lie in ambush there and kill people, and those who are smart don't pass there. The blessed Holy One demands requital for the blood of that priest every day."[163]

He opened, saying, "*Yet this day at Nob to stand*… (Isaiah 10:32).[164] Those masters of the Academy have already interpreted this, but I do not say the same, for I have learned the mystery of the matter.[165] *Yet this day*. Who is this day? Well, so it is written: *Aaron took Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab* (Exodus 6:23), and this is a mystery pertaining to Assembly of Israel, whose bridesman is Aaron—to prepare the house, to attend to Her, to conduct Her to the King to couple as one. From here on, every priest serving in the Temple follows this pattern.[166]

"Ahimelech was an eminent high priest, and all those priests accompanying him were bridesmen of *Matronita*. Once they were killed, *Matronita* was left all alone, the house was destroyed, and there was no one to serve Her or prepare the house or delight Her to couple with the King. From that time on, She passed to the Left, and is poised over the world, lurking over all. She killed Saul and his sons, kingship vanished from them, and many thousands and

myriads of Israelites died. Until now, that sin dangled over Israel, until Sennacherib came and incited all. This is *Yet this day at Nob to stand*—supernal day. And who is that? Assembly of Israel, who lost Her bridesmen; the one who remained without the Right and had to cling to the Left—for the priest is the Right, so She had to cling to the Left. Therefore, *Yet this day at Nob to stand*.[167]

"Come and see what is written: *Gibeah of Saul fled* (Isaiah 10:29). Why *Saul* here? Well, because he killed the priests, causing the Right Arm to be uprooted from the world. Here too, from that day on, no one has passed that place without endangering his life."[168]

Rabbi Yose said to Rabbi Ḥiyya, "Didn't I tell you that he is a great man?"[169]

He opened, saying, "*Happy is the person who finds wisdom, the person who attains understanding* (Proverbs 3:13). *Happy is the person who finds wisdom* [50a]—like me, who found you and learned from you a word of wisdom. *The person who attains understanding*—like me, who waited for you, to join with you. This is the person for whom the blessed Holy One prepares, on the way, the face of *Shekhinah*. Of this is written *The path of the righteous is like gleaming light, shining ever brighter until full day* (ibid. 4:18)."[170]

The walked on. That man opened, saying, "*Of David, a psalm. The earth and her fullness are YHVH's*… (Psalms 24:1). In one place, *A psalm of David*; and in another, *Of David, a psalm.* What is the difference between them? Well, *Of David, a psalm*—a song about Assembly of Israel. *A psalm of David*—a song that David sang about himself.[171]

"*The earth and her fullness are YHVH's. YHVH's*—the blessed Holy One. *The earth and her fullness*—Assembly of Israel and all the multitudes joining Her, called *her fullness*; this is *The whole earth is full of His glory* (Isaiah 6:3).[172]

"תבל (*Tevel*), *The world, and those who dwell in her* (Psalms 24:1)—the earth below, called *tevel*, linked to

Judgment above, as is written: *He judges tevel, the world, with righteousness* (ibid. 9:9). Whether an individual or a single nation or the whole world, by this Judgment they are judged.[173]

"Come and see: Pharaoh imbibed from this Judgment, until he and all his people perished. As soon as this Judgment aroused against him, the prince appointed to rule over them was removed and eliminated; then all those below perished, as is written: *He removed the wheel of his chariots* (Exodus 14:25). Who is *the wheel of his chariots*? *His chariots*—Pharaoh's. And who is their *wheel*? That prince ruling over them. So, they all died in the sea. Why in the sea? Well, the supernal sea aroused against them, and they were obliterated by Her hand. Consequently it is written: *they were drowned in the Red Sea* (ibid. 15:4)."[174]

Rabbi Yose said, "Certainly so! Therefore it is written: בים סוף (*be-yam suf*), *in the Red Sea*—סופא (*sofa*), end, of rungs."[175]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, *"Causing him to drive* בכבדות (*bikhvedut*), *with difficulty* (Exodus 14:25). What is *bikhvedut, with difficulty*? Well, from here we learn that according to the conduct by which a person conducts himself, so is he conducted. Of Pharaoh is written *Pharaoh's heart* יכבד (*yikhbad*), *hardened* (ibid. 9:7). By that same word, the blessed Holy One conducted him: *bikhvedut, with difficulty*—precisely. The blessed Holy One said to him, 'Evil one, you hardened your heart! I will conduct you similarly.' So, *causing him to drive bikhvedut, with difficulty*.[176]

"*Egypt said, 'Let me flee from before Israel!'* (Exodus 14:25). *Egypt said*—the prince appointed over the Egyptians."[177]

Rabbi Yose said, "This matter is difficult. For since he was already removed from his dominion, how could he pursue Israel? Well, certainly it embraces all, but this refers to Egypt below; because once their power was broken above, their might was broken below, as is written: *for YHVH*

is fighting for them against Egypt (ibid.)—*against Egypt,* precisely: their power above. As has been established: *king of Egypt,* anonymous. Here, *Egypt said, 'Let me flee from before Israel!'*—for they saw that their power had been broken above.[178]

"Come and see: When this Assembly of Israel arouses, all those linked to Her are linked below—and Israel above them all, for they grasp Her by the trunk of the Tree, as has been established. Consequently, Israel are linked with Her more closely than all other nations; and when they arouse, the power of all other nations is broken—from those ruling over them.[179]

"Come and see: This prince—dominion of the Egyptians—oppressed Israel with many kinds of enslavement, as has been established. After he was broken first, those kingdoms were broken, as is written: *for* YHVH נלחם להם במצרים (*nilḥam la-hem be-mitsrayim*), *is fighting them with Egypt—fighting them,* precisely!"[180]

The angel of Elohim *who was going before the camp of Israel moved* [*and went behind them*] (Exodus 14:19).

Matnitin.[181] Before pure air settled and shone, pierced stones were clogged. Three winds enveloped by three were sunken, waters blocked below holes.[182] By seventy– two letters, they returned to their places. [50b] After seventy-two rungs, those stones were split, pierced beneath an engraved flint. Gathering together, they became a single assemblage.[183]

Afterward, they divided, becoming two waters—half congealing, half sinking; these rising, those falling. From here, the world began to divide.[184]

Above, above is another flint, engraved with seventy-two seals of a potent signet ring, by which are submerged rolling waves of the sea. When they move, they divide to

four corners: one division rising, one division falling; one to the side of the north, one to the side of the south. When they converge as one, flaming coals arise in the flashing blade of the whirling sword.[185]

A single column is inserted into the sea. A rung—messenger of the supernal governor—rises through that column above, above, sees from afar a convoy of ships sailing the sea. Who has seen waves rising and falling, wind blowing upon them, fish of the sea pulling all those ships in all directions of the world?[186]

When that rung descends through that column—a thousand on his right and a thousand on his left. He returns and sits in His place like a king upon his throne, that rung. For when they sail the sea in four directions of the world, She sets out with Him, returns with Him; He returns to the column of the King.[187]

Then heralds come forth: "Let those who have eyes raise them above, above! Let those who have wings stand erect! Let those who have faces cover them until the sea sets forth on its journeys!" Then, *The angel of Elohim journeyed*… (Exodus 14:19).[188]

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, "*She is like the ships of a merchant, bringing her food from afar* (Proverbs 31:14). *Like the ships a merchant*—Assembly of Israel. *Bringing her food from afar*—as is said: *Behold, the name of YHVH comes from afar* (Isaiah 30:27).[189]

"*Bringing her food*—by one rung resting upon Her, through which are channeled all those streams and bubbling springs flowing to the sea, as is said: *All the streams flow to the sea*… (Ecclesiastes 1:7). Although all those streams are conducted through that rung, which conveys them to that sea, do not think that it pours them out and others do not spread and flow through it as before—the verse goes on to say: *to the place the streams flow*… (ibid.). *To the place*—of that rung, where the streams flow

once—*there they return to flow* (ibid.): there they return from the supernal site, never ceasing, all gathering in that place. And why? *To flow*—to flow to that sea, as has been said. What is the name of that rung? It is called Righteous One."[190]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "It is written: *There ships sail…* (Psalms 104:26). *There*—in that sea, for they sail along until She comes to join that rung. Then is written: *Leviathan whom You formed to play with* (ibid.)."[191]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "Above, higher above is a coupling abiding in love, never separating."[192]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Who attains that?"

He replied, "One who has a share in the world that is coming—in the world that is coming, precisely!"[193]

He said, "But look! From here we learn, as is written: *Leviathan* זה (*zeh*), *whom, You formed to play with* (Psalms 104:26)—implied by what is said: *zeh*. *Zeh* and זאת (*zot*) are well known."[194]

Rabbi Abba said, "Both of you have spoken well! And this of Rabbi Yehudah's is precisely fine.[195] The blessed Holy One has prepared everything with which to delight the righteous, as is written: *Then you will delight upon YHVH* (Isaiah 58:14)."[196]

Rabbi Abba said, "How many thousands, how many myriads of holy camps does the blessed Holy One have! Masters of supernal faces, masters of eyes, masters of weapons, masters of trumpeting, masters of howling, masters of judgment, masters of compassion. Above them He has appointed *Matronita* to minister before Him in the palace.[197]

"Corresponding to these, *Matronita* has armed camps—bearing sixty faces, all girded with swords, encircling Her. Before Her they go forth, before Her they come in; with six wings they fly throughout the world. In front of every single one, coals of flaming fire—his garments flashing fire. On his back, blade of a sword flashing throughout the world, to

guard [51a] Her, as is written: *the flame of the whirling sword to guard the way to the Tree of Life* (Genesis 3:24).[198]

"Who is *the way to the Tree of Life*? *Matronita*, who is the way to that great and mighty tree, the Tree of Life.[199] And it is written: *Behold the bed of Solomon! Sixty warriors surrounding her, of the warriors of Israel* (Song of Songs 3:7)—Israel above. *All of them skilled with a sword*… (ibid., 8). When *Matronita* moves, they all move behind Her, as is written: *The angel of Elohim moved*… (Exodus 14:19)."[200]

Now, is She called מלאך האלהים (*mal'akh ha-Elohim*), *angel of Elohim*? Rabbi Abba said, "Yes. Come and see! Rabbi Shim'on said as follows: The blessed Holy One established before Him a holy palace, a supernal palace, a holy city, a supernal city, called 'Jerusalem, the holy city.' Whoever enters the presence of the King enters only through this holy city—following the way to the King, for from here the way is paved—as is written: *This is the gate to YHVH; the righteous shall enter through it* (Psalms 118:20).[201]

"Every mission that the King wishes issues from the house of *Matronita*; every mission from below to the King enters the house of *Matronita* first, and from there to the King. Consequently, *Matronita* is agent of all, from above to below and from below to above, for She is the opening to the King, way to the King, and no secret is concealed from Her, from above to below or from below to above. Thus, She is agent of all, as is written: מלאך (*Mal'akh*), *The messenger of, Elohim who was going before the camp of Israel moved* (Exodus 14:19)—Israel above. *Mal'akh, The messenger of, Elohim*—as is written: *And YHVH was going before them by day* (ibid. 13:21), as we have established.[202]

"Now, is it an honor for the King that *Matronita* should go and wage wars and act as an agent? Well, this may be compared to a king who coupled with a lofty noble lady. The king saw how her glory surpassed all other noble ladies of the world. He said, 'They are all concubines compared to

my lady! She surpasses them all. What shall I do for her? Well, look! My entire household will be in her hands.' The king issued a proclamation: 'Henceforth, all affairs of the king are entrusted to the *matronita*.' What did he do? The king placed in her control all his weapons, all the warriors, all those royal jewels, all the royal treasures. He said, 'From now on, anyone who needs me cannot speak with me until he notifies the *matronita*.'[203]

"Similarly, the blessed Holy One, out of His great love for Assembly of Israel, entrusted everything to Her. He said, 'Look! All the others are nothing compared with Her.' He said, *'Sixty queens are they, and eighty concubines…. One she is, my dove, my perfect one; one she is to her mother…* (Song of Songs 6:8–9). What shall I do for Her? Well, look! My entire household will be in Her hands.' He issued a proclamation: 'Henceforth, all affairs of the King are entrusted to *Matronita*.' He placed in Her control all His weapons—lances, swords, bows, arrows, catapults, fortresses, stones, all those warriors, as is written: *Behold the bed of Solomon! Sixty warriors surrounding her…All of them skilled with a sword…*(Song of Songs 3:7–8). The King said, 'From now on, My battles are in Your hand. My weapons are handed over to You, along with the warriors. From now on, You will guard Me,' as is written: *Guardian of Israel* (Psalms 121:4). 'From now on, anyone who needs Me cannot speak with Me until he notifies *Matronita*.' As is written: בזאת (*Be-zot*), *With this, shall Aaron enter the holy zone* (Leviticus 16:3)—agent of all, as we have established. Consequently, all is honor of *Matronita*.[204]

"*The angel of Elohim who was going before the camp of Israel moved*—as has been said—*and went behind them* (Exodus 14:19). Why *behind them*? So that in front of Her would appear warriors, catapultiers, lancemen, swordsmen—revealed in front of Her—since other camps were coming to wage war against Israel from above.[205]

“We have learned: In that hour the ruling prince appointed over Egypt came and gathered six hundred attacking chariots, with six hundred empowered princely assailants on every single chariot, as is written: *He took six hundred select chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt* (Exodus 14:7). Now, weren’t the *six hundred select chariots* themselves *the chariots of Egypt*? Why *and all the chariots of Egypt*? Well, so it has been taught: Samael lent him six hundred attacking chariots, assisting him, as is written: *He took six hundred* [51b] *select chariots*…[206]

“When did the blessed Holy One requite Samael? In the battle of Sisera, when the blessed Holy One plucked all those chariots and they were delivered into the hands of *Matronita*, as is written: *The river Kishon swept them away, the primeval river*… (Judges 5:21).[207] And in the time to come they will all be handed over, as is written: *Who is this coming from Edom*…? *‘It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save’* (Isaiah 63:1). Therefore, *and went behind them* (Exodus 14:19).”[208] *And the column of cloud moved from before them* (Exodus 14:19). Who is this *column of cloud*? Rabbi Yose said, “The cloud that always appears with *Shekhinah*, and this is the cloud that Moses entered.”[209]

Rabbi Abba said, “It is written: *YHVH was going before them by day in a column of cloud* (Exodus 13:21). Rather, it is the assistance of Righteous One and the spread of His impress; so this cloud goes *by day,* and it is written: *By day YHVH directs* חסדו (*ḥasdo*), *His love* (Psalms 42:9). This comes from the side of *Ḥesed* and is called *Ḥesed*, while another cloud goes by night and is called *column of fire* (Exodus, ibid.).”[210]

Rabbi Shim’on said, *“The column of cloud by day* (Exodus 13:22)—Abraham. *The column of fire by night* (ibid.)—Isaac. Both of them appeared in *Shekhinah*. And as for what Rabbi Abba said, so it is, for through this rung they appeared.[211]

“As for this: *The angel of Elohim* [*who was going before the camp of Israel*] *moved and went behind them* (Exodus 14:19)—moving from the side of *Ḥesed* and cleaving to the side of *Gevurah*, for the time had arrived to be clothed in Judgment.[212]

“Come and see: At that moment, the moon became completely full, inheriting seventy holy names on three sides. On one side, She was arrayed in crowns of *Ḥesed*, in seventy radiant engravings of supernal Father, who illumined Her.[213]

“On the second side, She was arrayed in lances of *Gevurah*, in sixty lashes of fire—along with ten of Her own, descending from the side of supernal Mother in engraved decrees.

“On the third side, She was arrayed in garments of purple—called *Tif’eret*—worn by the Holy King, inherited by the Holy Son along with seventy supernal crowns from the side of Father and Mother. He embraces this side and that side.[214]

“We have learned: From the side of *Ḥesed*, seventy and two witnesses. From the side of *Gevurah*, seventy and two scribes. From the side of *Tif’eret*, seventy and two colors—to be glorified.[215]

“This place is engraved, one by one, and the Holy Name culminates—mystery of the Chariot. Here are engraved the patriarchs, conjoining as one, and that is the Holy Name, engraved with its letters.

“Combination of these letters: First letters inscribed in their order, straight—for all those first letters appear in *Ḥesed*, proceeding straight, arranged correctly.

“Second letters inscribed revolving backward, for all those second letters appear in *Gevurah*, revealing judgments and weapons issuing from the left side.

“Third letters are letters inscribed to display colors, crowning the Holy King. All join and link to Him, and He is adorned with His crowns aligned, inscribed on this side and

on that side—like a king completely adorned. For here is inscribed the Holy Name, engraved with seventy-two letters crowning the patriarchs—supernal holy Chariot.[216]

"Now, you might ask, 'These third letters—why aren't some of them written straight, in their order, and some of them backward? For we have learned: *It was You who established equity* (Psalms 99:4), aligning this side and that side—the blessed Holy One establishes *equity* for both sides. And it is written: *The central bar in the middle of the boards* [*running from end to end*] (Exodus 26:28)—the blessed Holy One. Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "This is Jacob," and all is one.'[217]

"Well, this may be compared to a king who is totally complete, his mind totally complete. What is the conduct of that king? His face always shines, for he is complete, and in this manner he judges favorably and unfavorably. One who is a fool sees the face of the king shining and is not wary of him; one who is wise sees the face of the king shining and says, 'Surely the king is complete, totally complete, his mind complete. I see that in that radiance dwells judgment, [52a] although concealed, unrevealed—since otherwise the king would not be complete; so one must beware.'[218]

"Similarly, the blessed Holy One is always complete, in this aspect and in that aspect, but He appears only with a radiant face. Consequently, those wicked fools are not wary of Him, whereas virtuous wise ones say, 'The King is complete—although His face appears shining, Judgment is concealed within. One must beware of Him!'"[219]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "From here: *I am YHVH—I have not diverged* (Malachi 3:6)—'I have not separated elsewhere. All is in interwoven within Me, these two aspects encompassed by Me.' Therefore, all appears straight; although the letters are linked to this side and that side, they are written in their order."[220]

The angel of Elohim who was going before the camp of Israel moved and went behind them, and the column of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them (Exodus 14:19). Until here, one side, *Ḥesed* to Abraham.[221]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "El'azar, my son, come and see this secret! When the Holy Ancient One illumines the King, He transmits to Him holy supernal crowns. When these reach Him, the patriarchs are crowned, and then—consummation of all. Then, *Matronita* sets out on Her journeys with that consummation of the patriarchs, and when She is crowned by them all, She is blessed and invested with authority over all.[222]

מ	מ	ע	א	ש	ל	א	ו
ד	פ	ע	ח	ר	פ	ל	י
מ	נ	מ	ר	א	נ	ה	ס
א	י	ו	י	ל	י	י	ע
ח	ה	ד	ה	ו	מ	ם	מ
ר	ם	ה	ם	י	ח	ה	ל
י	ו	ע	ו	ל	נ	ה	א
ה	י	נ	י	ך	ה	ל	ך
ם	ע	ן	ס	מ	י	ך	ה

"Until here, columns arranged in order, in the mystery of *Ḥesed*, not deviating right or left.[223]

ה	ל	ו	א	נ	ר	ב	ח
ל	א	ה	י	ע	ש	ו	מ
י	ה	ל	ו	ה	י	ם	ן
ל	ז	י	ך	י	ה	י	י
ה	ב	ל	ש	ה	נ	ר	ב
ל	ר	ה	ח	י	ח	צ	א
כ	ק	ת	ה	ו	מ	מ	ב
ה	א	א	ו	ל	ן	ה	י
ז	ל	ר	ן	א	י	נ	ו

“Or in this manner, all of them left, from the side of *Gevurah*:

ה	כ	ל	ה	ל	י	ל	ה
ק	ר	ב	ז	ה	א	ל	ז
ה	ל	י	ל	ה	ו	ל	א
ש	ך	ו	י	א	ר	א	ת
י	ה	ע	נ	ן	ו	ה	ח
י	ש	ר	א	ל	ו	י	ה
ו	ב	י	ן	מ	ח	נ	ה
ח	נ	ה	מ	צ	ר	י	ם
ו	י	ב	א	ב	י	ן	מ

“Until here, columns arranged backward, in the mystery of *Gevurah*, all of them left contained in right.[224]

י	ה	י	י	ה	ו	ד	ו
ב	י	ל	ם	י	ל	ו	י
ק	ם	ה	ע	ם	ך	ע	ט
ע	ל	ו	ז	ב	י	ל	מ
ו	ח	י	ה	ר	ה	ה	ש
ה	ר	ש	כ	ו	ו	י	ה
מ	ב	ם	ל	ח	ה	ם	א
י	ה	א	ה	ק	א	ו	ת
ם	ו	ת	ל	ד	ת	י	י

“Until here, columns of the Holy King arranged in *Tif’eret*, all included in Him.[225]

“Afterward, patriarchs conjoin, transformed into one holy Name:

רהת	אכא	ללה	מהש	עלמ	סיט	ילי	והו
הקם	הרי	סבה	יזל	ההע	לאו	אלד	הזי
חהו	מלה	ייי	נלך	פהל	לוו	רלי	לאו
ושר	לרב	אום	רייי	שאה	ירת	האא	נתה
ייז	רהע	העם	אני	מנד	רוק	להח	יחו
מיה	עשל	ערי	סאל	ילה	וול	יכ	ההה

פוי	מבה	וית	נאא	עמם	החש	דני	והו
מחי	ענו	יהה	ומב	סצר	הרח	ייל	נסם
סום	היי	יבמ	ראה	חבו	איע	מוק	דמב

“According to this pattern, the holy supernal Name—engraved with its letters, inscribed on the holy supernal Chariot, consummating the crown of the patriarchs.”[226]

Rabbi Yeisa said, “We have found this mystery in the Shofar Blasts of Rav of Babylonia:[227] Three times ובכן, ובכן, ובכן (*uvkhen, uvkhen, uvkhen*), ‘and therefore, and therefore, and therefore,’ corresponding to these three—and so is the arrangement.”[228]

Rabbi Yose said, “All is included in this holy Agent, completed in Her. Thus, in Her, consummation of the holy Chariot.”[229]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “This is the Holy Name, adornment of the patriarchs, adorned with their engravings, joined as one. Interwoven in forty-eight words—perfection of all, essence of roots.[230]

“Come and see! Trunk of the tree: א-ל-ף—אלף (*alef*), נון (*nun*), יוד (*yod*). Head of all branches of the tree: ו-ה-ו (*vav, he, vav*), ו-ה-ו (*vav, he, vav*). As the Companions have aroused, entirety of branches, trunk, and root is in forty-eight words; and that is inscribed in three upper worlds, in three lower worlds. Corresponding to this: *Holy, holy, holy—holy* above, *holy* in the middle, *holy* below. *Holy, Ḥesed*; *holy, Gevurah*; *holy, Tif’eret*. All engraved in seventy-two, as has been said. Blessed is He, blessed is His Name forever and ever. Amen.[231]

“Come and see: When Israel encamped by the sea, they saw many [52b] troops, many armies, many camps, from above to below—all assembled against Israel. In their distress, they began praying. At that moment, the Holy Ancient One appeared and favor became manifest in all those upper worlds. Then radiance of all lustered.”[232]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “At that moment, Israel sensed distress on all sides: the sea with its waves billowing in front of them; behind them, all those troops, all those camps of Egypt; above them, so many assailants. They began crying out to the blessed Holy One. Then is written: *YHVH said to Moses, ‘Why are you crying out to Me?’* And it has been taught in the Book of Concealment: *To Me*, precisely! All depends upon the Ancient One.[233] Then, all shone as one,

and the sea executed supernal judgments; upper and lower beings were delivered into its hands. Therefore all is as difficult for the blessed Holy One as the splitting of the Red Sea—all as they have established. Why? Because the splitting of the Red Sea depends on the Ancient One."[234]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "There is one doe on earth, and the blessed Holy One does so much for her. When she cries out, the blessed Holy One hearkens to her anguish. And when the world is in need of mercy, for water, she cries aloud and the blessed Holy One listens and then feels compassion for the world, as is written: *As a hind longs for streams of water*… (Psalms 42:2).[235]

"When she needs to give birth, she is totally constricted; then she puts her head between her knees, crying out and screaming, and the blessed Holy One feels compassion for her and provides her with a serpent who bites her genitalia, opening and tearing that place, and immediately she gives birth."

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Concerning this matter, do not ask and do not test את יהוה (*et YHVH*)—so it is precisely!"[236]

YHVH on that day delivered Israel [*from the hand of Egypt*], *and Israel saw Egypt dead* [*on the shore of the sea*] (Exodus 14:30). The blessed Holy One showed them that appointed ruler of the Egyptians, whom He had passed through the River of Fire, which was by the shore of the Great Sea. What does *dead* mean? As they have established: that he was deprived of his dominion.[237]

Israel saw the great hand (Exodus 14:31).[238] Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "Here the hand was completed and all those fingers; the hand was completed by being included in the right. For so we have learned: All is encompassed by the right and depends upon

the right, as is written: *Your right hand, O YHVH, smashes the enemy* (Exodus 15:6).”[239]

Rabbi Aḥa said, “There has never been anyone who hardened his heart before the blessed Holy One like Pharaoh!”

Rabbi Abba said, “So too, Sihon and Og!”[240]

He replied, “Not so! They hardened themselves against Israel, but against the blessed Holy One, no—not as Pharaoh hardened his spirit against Him, for every day he witnessed His mighty acts, yet would not repent.”[241]

Rabbi Yehudah said in the name of Rabbi Yitsḥak, “Pharaoh was wiser than all his sorcerers, and he gazed into all those crowns and all those spheres of knowledge; yet in none of their aspects did he see the deliverance of Israel, which was not dependent on any of them. Furthermore, with all of them they bound Israel in bonds, and Pharaoh did not realize that there is another bond—of Faith—above all; therefore he hardened his heart.”[242]

Rabbi Abba said, “It was solely this Name that hardened Pharaoh’s heart. For when Moses said *Thus says YHVH, God of Israel* (Exodus 5:1), this very word hardened his heart, as is written: *YHVH hardened Pharaoh’s heart* (ibid. 9:12). For in all of his wisdom was not to be found that this Name rules the earth.”[243]

Rabbi Yose said, “Later he said, *I have sinned against YHVH* (Exodus 10:16). The same mouth that said that, said this!”[244]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah opened, “אחת היא (*Aḥat hi*), *It is all one! Therefore I say, ‘Innocent and wicked He destroys*’ (Job 9:22). This verse inheres in mystery of wisdom. *Aḥat hi*—*She is one*. What does this mean: *She is one*? As is written: *She is one, my dove, my perfect one; one she is to her mother* (Song of Songs 6:9). With this, the blessed Holy One renders His judgments below, renders His judgments completely.[245]

“When the blessed Holy One arouses His judgments with this—rendering His judgments with this crown—then is written: *Innocent and wicked He destroys.* [53a] For the righteous are seized for the sins of the wicked, as is written: *YHVH said to the angel who was sowing destruction among the people*, ‘רב (*Rav*), *The great one*!’ (2 Samuel 24:16). Therefore Rabbi Yose said, ‘Job spoke a word but did not learn the word.’”[246]

She is one (Job 9:22). Rabbi Yeisa said, “This is Assembly of Israel in the exile of Egypt, because for Her sake the blessed Holy One slew the Egyptians, wreaking vengeance upon them, as is written: *Innocent and wicked He destroys* (ibid.).”[247]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “Job was struck just as Israel went out of Egypt. Job said, ‘If so, all characters are equal: *Innocent and wicked He destroys*. Pharaoh oppressed Israel and said, *Who is YHVH that I should heed His voice?* (Exodus 5:2); whereas I did not oppress them and did nothing at all: *Innocent and wicked He destroys*. As is written: *Whoever feared the word of YHVH among Pharaoh’s servants* (Exodus 9:20).”[248]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Those falling hailstones that were impeded by Moses later wreaked vengeance in the days of Joshua. And in the time to come, the remaining ones are destined to fall upon Edom….”[249]

Rabbi Yose said, “It is written: *As in the days of your coming out of the land of Egypt, I will show him wonders* (Micah 7:15).”[250]

Alternatively, *Israel saw the great hand that YHVH wielded* [*against Egypt, and the people were in awe of YHVH, and they trusted in YHVH and in Moses His servant*] (Exodus 14:31). The beginning of this verse does not match its end, nor its end its beginning! At first, *Israel saw*; and afterward, *the people were in awe of YHVH*.[251]

Well, Rabbi Yehudah said, “That old man who descended with his children into exile, submitted to exile, and brought his children into exile—he himself saw all that vengeance and all those mighty deeds performed by the blessed Holy One against Egypt, as is written: *Israel saw the great hand—Israel,* precisely!”

And Rabbi Yehudah said, “The blessed Holy One raised that old man and said to him, ‘Arise, see your son who is coming forth from a powerful nation! Arise, see the mighty deeds that I performed against the Egyptians for your son!’[252]

“This accords with what Rabbi Yose said: When Israel journeyed down into exile to Egypt, fear and fierce terror fell upon him. The blessed Holy One said to him, ‘Jacob, why are you afraid? *Fear not to go down to Egypt*’ (Genesis 46:3). From what is written—*Fear not*—can be inferred the fear that he felt. He said to him, *For I will make of you a great nation there* (ibid.).

“He said to Him, ‘I am afraid of exile—and they will destroy my children!’

“He replied, *I Myself will go down with you to Egypt* (Genesis 46:4).

“He said, ‘Furthermore, that I will not attain the privilege of being buried with my fathers and I will not see the deliverance of my children.’

“He replied, *I Myself will surely bring you up as well* (ibid.). *I will bring you up*—to be buried in the tomb of your fathers. *Surely as well*—to see the deliverance of your children and the mighty deeds that I will perform for them.[253]

“On the very day that Israel came forth from Egypt, the blessed Holy One raised Jacob and said to him, ‘Arise, see your son being delivered with so much power and with mighty deeds that I have performed for them!’ Jacob appeared and saw it all, as is written: *Israel saw* (Exodus 14:31).”

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “From here: *He brought you out of Egypt* בפניו (*be-fanav*), *with His presence, with His great power* (Deuteronomy 4:37). What is *be-fanav, with His face*? With the face of Jacob, who brought them all.”[254]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah said, “*He brought you out with His face* —with the face of Abraham, for it is written: *Abraham flung himself on his face…* (Genesis 17:17). Come and see: Abraham said, *To a hundred-year-old will a child be born?…* (ibid.). The blessed Holy One replied, ‘By your life! You will see many multitudes, many forces issuing from you!’ When Israel went out of Egypt—all those tribes, all those myriads —the blessed Holy One raised Abraham and he saw them, as is written: *He brought you out with His face*.”[255]

Rabbi Abba said, “All the patriarchs appeared there in that deliverance, as is written: *He brought you out with His face*. What is *with His face*? The patriarchs.”[256]

Rabbi El’azar said, “*He brought you out with His face*— Jacob. *With His power*—Isaac. *Great*—Abraham.”[257]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “Similarly, for the sake of the patriarchs, deliverance always appears for Israel, as is written: *I will remember My covenant with Jacob and also My covenant with Isaac and also My covenant with Abraham I will remember, and the land I will remember* (Leviticus 26:42). The patriarchs, granted; but why *and the land I will remember*? Well, to include with them King David, who together with the patriarchs constitutes the Chariot, [53b] and they always arouse deliverance for Israel.[258]

“*Israel saw the great hand that YHVH wielded against Egypt* (Exodus 14:31). Did He wield it now? Look, it was wielded previously! Why *that YHVH wielded against Egypt*? Well, less than five fingers is not called *hand. Great*—five others included with them; then it is called *great*. Every single finger amounts to a large sum. The blessed Holy One wielded it now, and thereby all those rungs were plucked from their links.[259]

“From here we learn: Of the first five fingers is written *Pharaoh’s heart hardened* (Exodus 7:22). Once those five were completed, nothing was under Pharaoh’s control; then is written *YHVH hardened Pharaoh’s heart* (ibid. 9:12). Therefore, *Israel saw the great hand*…[260]

“*And they believed in YHVH* (Exodus 14:31). Could it be that until now they did not believe in *YHVH*? Look at what is written: *The people believed and they heard*… (ibid. 4:31)! They had seen all those mighty deeds that the blessed Holy One performed for them in Egypt. Rather, why *they believed*? The word that Moses spoke: *Moses said to the people, ‘Do not be afraid… for as you see the Egyptians today, you will not see them again forever’* (Exodus 14:13).”[261]

Rabbi Yeisa said, “Look at what is written: *Israel saw Egypt dead* (Exodus 14:30); yet it is written: *You will not see them again* (ibid., 13)!”

Rabbi Yose replied, “They saw them dead.”

He said, “If it were written *You will not see them again alive*, I would agree.”[262]

Rabbi Abba said to him, “You have asked well! But come and see: It is written *From world until world* (Psalms 106:48), and we learned: world above and world below. World above—from there is the beginning of kindling lamps. World below—there is consummation, composed of all. From this world arouse mighty deeds upon those below.[263]

“Through this world, the blessed Holy One performs signs for Israel and generates a miracle. When this world aroused to perform miracles, all the Egyptians were sunk in the sea by this world, and a miracle occurred for Israel through this world. Therefore it is written: *You will not see them again* עד עולם (*ad olam*), *forever—ad, until,* this עולם (*olam*), *world,* arouses and they are delivered to its judgments. As soon as they were delivered to it to be judged, it is written: *Israel saw Egypt dead on the shore of the sea* (Exodus 14:30). As is written: *from world until world—until* this

world, precisely, arouses. At that moment is written: *They believed in YHVH and in Moses His servant* (ibid., 31)."

Then sang Moses and the Children of Israel… (Exodus 15:1).[264]

Rabbi Yehudah opened, "*Before I formed you in the belly, I knew you…* (Jeremiah 1:5). Happy is the share of Israel, whom the blessed Holy One desired more than all other nations! Out of the abundance of His great love for them, He appointed over them a faithful prophet of truth, arousing upon him a spirit of holiness surpassing all other faithful prophets, and generating him from His very share—set aside by Jacob from his sons for the blessed Holy One. Since he was His, the blessed Holy One took him and crowned him with many crowns, anointing him with holy anointing oil from above. Then He drew from his children a holy spirit from above, girding him with holy sashes of faith.[265]

"At the moment that the time of Moses, Faithful Prophet, arrived, the blessed Holy One brought forth a holy spirit from the quarry of precious sapphire, treasured away among 248 crowns, and set it before Him—entrusting him with all His house, giving him 173 keys, crowning him with 5 crowns, each crown ascending and illumining radiant worlds and lamps hidden in the treasury of the supernal holy King. Then He passed him through all the spices of the Garden of Eden and brought him into His palace.[266]

"Open מ (*mem*) ascended, was adorned with its crowns, and adorned him with 325 crowns, depositing its keys into his hands, and passing him through all its flying forces. Then they all trembled, and opened, saying, 'Withdraw all around him! Facet of facets! For the blessed Holy One has aroused a spirit to rule, to agitate worlds.' A voice issued, saying, 'Who is this with all these keys [54a] in his hands?' Another voice opened, saying, 'Accept him among you! This

is the one destined to descend among human beings, and Torah—treasure of treasures—is destined to be delivered into his hands and to shake worlds above and below through this one.' At that moment they all trembled and followed him. They opened, saying, *You let a human ride over our head; we went through fire and through water* (Psalms 66:12). Then that spirit ascended and stood before the King.[267]

"ש (*Shin*) of the patriarchs adorned him with three holy crowns, deposited all the keys of the King in his hand, and appointed him trustee of the house.[268]

"ה (*He*) ascended, was adorned with its crowns, and received him from the King.[269] Then that spirit descended in ships sailing the Great Sea, who accepted him in order to raise him for the King, and She provided him with two hundred weapons to smite Pharaoh and his whole land. On Sabbath and new moon, She elevated him to the King; then he was named with these inscribed letters.[270]

"At the moment that he descended to earth in the seed of Levi, 425 thrones were prepared for the King, and 425 empowered engravings escorted that spirit to its place. When he issued into the world, ה (*he*) illumined his face, and the house was filled with splendor. That very moment, the blessed Holy One proclaimed for him: *Before I formed you in the belly, I knew you;* [*before you came out of the womb, I consecrated you; a prophet to the nations I appointed you*] (Jeremiah 1:5)."[271]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "When the blessed Holy One cast down the appointed prince of the Egyptians, and Moses and the Children of Israel saw him, they sang a song, as is written: *Then sang Moses and the Children of Israel* (Exodus 15:1)."[272]

Rabbi Abba said, "I have examined all the praises offered to the blessed Holy One, and all of them open with אז (*az*), *then: Then Solomon said* (1 Kings 8:12); *Then Joshua said* (Joshua 10:12); *Then Israel sang* (Numbers 21:17).[273]

Well, so it has been taught: All the miracles and mighty deeds that were performed for Israel—when radiance of the Holy Ancient One sparkled in its crowns, engraved and inscribed with א (*alef*). *Alef* pierces the darkness and radiates in every direction, and when radiance of *alef* joins and reaches ז (*zayin*)—Who is *zayin*? *Sword of YHVH, full of blood* (Isaiah 34:6)—then it performs miracles and mighty deeds, because *alef* has joined with *zayin*. This is song, song on all sides; this is: *Then sang Moses and the Children of Israel*.[274]

"ישיר" (*Yashir*), *Will sing* (Exodus 15:1). The verse should read שר (*shar*), *sang*. However, this word is suspended—fulfilling that time and fulfilling the time to come, when Israel is destined to sing this song of praise.[275]

"*Moses and the Children of Israel* (ibid.). From here we learn that even though the ancient righteous ascended supernal rungs above and have been bound in the bond of the bundle of life, they are all destined to revive in a body and to see signs and mighty deeds that the blessed Holy One performs for Israel, as is written: *Then will sing Moses*…."[276]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "From here: *YHVH will once again extend His hand* לקנות (*liqnot*), *to acquire, the remnant of His people* (Isaiah 11:11). *Liqnot*—as is said: *YHVH* קנני (*qanani*), *created me, at the beginning of His way* (Proverbs 8:22).[277]

"*The remnant of His people*—the righteous among them, who are called *remnant*, as is said: *Two men remained in the camp* (Numbers 11:26). And we have learned: The world endures only through those who make themselves remnants.[278]

"Now, you might ask, 'Since they have been bound in the bundle of life and are enjoying supernal delight, why would the blessed Holy One bring them down to earth?' Go and learn from the first time, when all those spirits and souls occupied a supernal rung above and the blessed Holy One brought them down to earth below. All the more so

now, for the blessed Holy One wants to straighten the crooked, as is said: *For there is no person so righteous on earth that he does good and never sins* (Ecclesiastes 7:20).[279]

"Now, you might ask, 'What about those who died due to the advice of the serpent?' Well, even they will arise and become advisers to King Messiah.[280]

"Therefore it has been taught: Moses is destined to sing a song in the time to come. Why? Because it is written: *As in the days of your coming out of the land of Egypt, I will show him wonders* (Micah 7:15). *I will show him*—the verse should read *I will show you*. However, *I will show him*—precisely! The one who saw originally, He will show once again; this is *I will show him.* Similarly it is written: *I will show him the salvation of God* (Psalms 50:23). [54b] Then, *will sing Moses and the Children of Israel*.[281]

"*This song* (Exodus 15:1)—song of *Matronita* to the blessed Holy One.[282]

"We have learned: Every person who chants this song each day intently is worthy of singing it in the time to come, for it encompasses what has passed and the world that is coming; it encompasses bonds of faith and the days of King Messiah.[283]

"את (*Et*) (Exodus 15:1)—to include all other praises offered by those above and below.[284]

"השירה (*Ha-shirah*), *song* (ibid.)—the verse should read שיר (*shir*), *song*. However, this is the song with which *Matronita* praises the King, uttered by Moses from below to above, as has been established.[285]

"To *YHVH* (ibid.)—for the King illumined Her face, and the face of the King beamed toward Her."[286]

Rabbi Yose said, "For all those oils that flowed, the Holy King conducted toward Her; therefore *Matronita* praises Him."[287]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "If so, why is it written *Moses and the Children of Israel*? *Matronita* should praise! Well, happy is

the share of Moses and the Children of Israel, who knew how to praise the King on behalf of *Matronita* fittingly, for all Her strength and power She inherited from the King!”

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, “*Arise, cry out in the night at the beginning of the watches!* (Lamentations 2:19). *Arise, cry out*—Assembly of Israel. *In the night*—in exile.”[288]

Rabbi Yose said, “*In the night*—in the time when She rules and arouses.”[289]

“לראש (*Le-rosh*), *At the beginning of, the watches*—the verse should read בראש (*be-rosh*), *in the beginning of*. However, *le-rosh, to the head of*, as is written: *above the head of the bed* (Genesis 47:31). And we have established: *The head of the bed* is *Yesod*. Here too, *to the head of* is *Yesod*, through whom *Matronita* is blessed.[290]

“*Head of the watches*—head of *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*.”[291]

Rabbi Yose said, “This is head of the crowns of the King and consummation.”[292]

Rabbi Abba said, “*To the head of* אשמרות (*ashmurot*), *the watches*—spelled deficiently. This is *the head of the bed*, and all refers to the Holy King, and this is *to YHVH* (Exodus 15:1).”[293]

Rabbi Yeisa said, “*To YHVH*—the river issuing from Eden, from which flows all anointing oil to kindle lamps. As implied subsequently, for it is written: *Let me sing to YHVH* (ibid.)—the Holy King. Therefore it is not written *Let me sing to Him*.[294]

“*And they said*, לאמר (*lemor*), *saying* (Exodus 15:1)—for generation after generation, so that it will never be forgotten. For whoever is worthy of this song in this world is worthy of it in the world that is coming, worthy of praising with it in the days of King Messiah, in the joy of the blessed Holy One. For it is written: *lemor, to say—to say* at that time, *to say* in the Holy Land when Israel dwelled in the land, *to say* in exile, *to say* in the redemption of Israel, *to say* in the world that is coming.[295]

"*Let me sing to* YHVH (Exodus 15:1). *Let me sing*—the verse should read *Let us sing*. Why *Let me sing*? Well, because they were offering praises that *Matronita* wished to offer."[296]

"*To* YHVH—the Holy King.

"*For He surged, O surged* (Exodus 15:1)—ascending, adorned with His crowns, to issue blessings, powers, mighty deeds consummately.[297]

"*For He surged, O surged. For He surged*—in this world. *O surged*—in the world that is coming. *For He surged*—at that time. *O surged*—to be adorned with His crowns in complete joy.[298]

"*Horse and its rider He hurled into the sea* (Exodus 15:1)—dominion below and dominion above, to whom they are linked, were delivered into that Great Sea, to take vengeance upon them. For so we have learned: The blessed Holy One does not execute judgment below until He does so with their dominion above, as is written: *YHVH will punish the host of the heights on high and the kings of the earth on the earth* (Isaiah 24:21)."[299]

He hurled into the sea. Rabbi Yehudah said, "On the very night of which is written *YHVH drove the sea with a mighty east wind*… (Exodus 14:21)—*YHVH drove the sea,* for mighty power aroused in Her, as is written: *with a mighty east wind all night*—at that time, *Matronita* requested of the King that all those troops below and all those powers above be delivered to Her. And they were all delivered into Her hands to wreak vengeance, as is written: *Horse and its rider He hurled into the sea—the sea,* unspecified: above and below."[300]

My strength and power is Yah (Exodus 15:2).

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, "*Behind and before You formed me; You placed your hand upon me* (Psalms 139:5).[301] How greatly human beings should honor

the blessed Holy One! For when He created the world, [55a] He gazed upon the human being, empowering him over all faces, and he resembled those above and below. He brought him down in precious form, and when creatures saw him they gathered round and bowed to him; fear and awe fell upon them, as is written: *Fear and dread of you shall be upon every living thing of the earth…* (Genesis 9:2). He brought him into His garden that He planted, to tend it, to have joy upon joy, to delight with him.[302] He fashioned him thirteen canopies covered with precious stones, and supernal angels rejoiced in his presence. Afterward, He commanded him concerning one tree, and he did not endure the command of his Lord.[303]

"I found in the Book of Enoch that after the blessed Holy One raised him and showed him all the higher and lower treasures, He showed him the Tree of Life and the tree concerning which Adam was commanded. He saw Adam's place in the Garden, and he saw that if Adam had observed this command, he could have existed continuously and been there continuously. Since he did not observe the command of his Lord, he was dismissed and punished."[304]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "Adam was created with two faces, as we have established.[305] *He took one of his sides* (Genesis 2:21): the blessed Holy One sawed him, and they became two, from east to west, as is written: *Behind and before You formed me* (Psalms 139:5)—*behind*, west; *and before*, east."[306]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "What did the blessed Holy One do? He adorned that female, consummating her beauty above all, and brought her to Adam, as is written: *YHVH Elohim built the side He had taken from the human into a woman and He brought her to the human* (Genesis 2:22).[307]

"Come and see: What is written above? *He took one* מצלעותיו (*mi-tsal'otav*), *of his sides* (ibid., 21). What is *one*? As is said: *She is one, my dove, my perfect one…* (Song of

Songs 6:9). *Mi-tsal'otav*—of his sides, as is said: ולצלע (*ul-tsela*), *and on the side of, the Tabernacle* (Exodus 26:20)."[308]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "The blessed Holy One placed a supernal soul in Adam, imbuing him with wisdom and understanding, to know all. From where did He provide the soul?"

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "From the place whence other holy souls derive."[309]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "From here, as is written: *Let the earth bring forth a living soul* (Genesis 1:24). Who is *the earth*? The one where the site of the Temple is found. *A living soul—a living soul* is the soul of Adam, first of all."[310]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "Adam knew supernal wisdom more than the heavenly angels; he contemplated all, and he perceived his Lord more than all other inhabitants of the world. After he sinned, the springs of wisdom were stopped up for him. What is written? *YHVH Elohim sent him away from the Garden of Eden*… (Genesis 3:23)."[311]

Rabbi Abba said, "Adam derived from male and female, as is written: *God said, 'Let us make a human in our image, according to our likeness* (Genesis 1:26); so they were formed male and female as one and separated afterward. Now, if you say *the ground from which he had been taken* (ibid., 23)—certainly so! This is the female, and the blessed Holy One was Her partner; this is male and female, all one entity."[312]

Rabbi Yose said, "*My strength and power is Yah* (Exodus 15:2)—that is, embracing one another, eternally inseparable, in love, in single desire. From there spread flows of streams and springs, supplying all, blessing all—unfailing waters of springs, as is said: *like a spring whose waters do not fail* (Isaiah 58:11). Therefore, *He has become my salvation* (Exodus, ibid.), since for this the Holy King draws and bestows to those below, and the right arouses to perform miracles.[313]

“*This is my God, and I will enshrine Him* (Exodus 15:2)—Righteous One, from whom issue blessings through His couplings. *I will enshrine Him*—in that place where love is found, the Temple.[314]

“*God of my father, and I will exalt Him* (ibid.)—Moses said this concerning the place from whose side the Levites derive. Until here, consummation of all in this verse.”[315]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “That which is written: *He has become my salvation* (Exodus 15:2)—Holy King, so it is! How do we know? From another verse we discover it, as is written: *For my strength and power is Yah YHVH, and He has become my salvation* (Isaiah 12:2)—as implied by the wording *YHVH, and He has become my salvation,* [55b] this is the Holy King.”[316]

My strength and power (Exodus 15:2). Rabbi Ḥizkiyah opened the verse that is written: *At all times a friend loves; a brother is born for adversity* (Proverbs 17:17). “*At all times a friend loves*—the blessed Holy One, of whom is written *Your friend and your father’s friend, do not forsake* (ibid. 27:10).[317]

“*A brother is born for adversity*. When your enemies afflict you, what does the blessed Holy One say? *For the sake of my brothers and friends* (Psalms 122:8), since Israel are called ‘brothers’ of the blessed Holy One.[318]

“*Is born*. What does this mean? Is He *born* now? Rather, when adversity *is born* in the world, *a brother* will meet you, saving you from those who afflict you.”[319]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “*Is born*—for the Holy King arouses through that strength, suckling from Mother on that side, as is written: *My strength and power is Yah, and He has become my salvation* (Exodus 15:2), to arouse mighty deeds against the enemies of Israel.”[320]

Rabbi Yeisa said, “How greatly should a person love the blessed Holy One! For there is no service of the blessed

Holy One other than love, and whoever loves Him, performing service in love, gains the blessed Holy One as Beloved.

"If so, how can we establish these verses: *Your friend and your father's friend, do not forsake* (Proverbs 27:10), and what is written: *Rarely set foot in your friend's house, lest he be satiated with you and hate you* (ibid. 25:17)? Well, the Companions have already established: 'This refers to ascent offerings…' And now, *Your friend and your father's friend, do not forsake*—serving Him, cleaving to Him, performing His commandments. *Do not forsake,* surely![321]

"As for what is said: *Rarely set foot in your friend's house*—this means: Cool your impulse, so that it not seethe and dominate you, and so that you do not perpetrate an alien thought.[322]

"*In your friend's house*. What is *your friend's house*? The holy soul that *your friend* brought to you, placing her within you.[323]

"So, the service of the blessed Holy One is to love Him with everything, as is written: *You shall love YHVH your God* [*with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might*] (Deuteronomy 6:5).

"*This is my God, and I will glorify Him* (Exodus 15:2). For all of Israel saw at the sea what Ezekiel the prophet did not see, and even embryos in their mothers' wombs saw and praised the blessed Holy One, all of them declaring, *This is my God, and I will glorify Him*.[324]

"*God of my father, and I will exalt Him* (ibid.), as is said: 'God of Abraham.'"

Rabbi Yose said, "If so, why *I will exalt Him,* since God of Abraham is above?"

He replied, "Even this is necessary, and all is one entity. *I will exalt Him* completely—including one who knows how to unify the Holy Name, for this is the service of the blessed Holy One."[325]

Rabbi Yehudah was sitting in the presence of Rabbi Shim'on and reading aloud what is written: *The voice of your watchmen! They raised their voices, together they will shout for joy* (Isaiah 52:8). "*The voice of your watchmen*. Who are *your watchmen*? Those who watch for when the blessed Holy One will have compassion to build His house.[326]

"*They raised their voices*—the verse should read *They will raise their voices*. Why *They raised their voices*? Well, every person who weeps and raises his voice over the destruction of the House of the blessed Holy One attains afterward what is written: *Together they will shout for joy*, and he attains seeing it inhabited in delight.[327]

"בשוב יהוה ציון (*Be-shuv YHVH tsiyyon*), *When YHVH returns Zion* (Isaiah, ibid.)—the verse should read בשוב יהוה אל ציון (*Be-shuv YHVH el tsiyyon*), *When YHVH returns to Zion*. Why *When YHVH returns Zion*?"[328]

He replied, "*When YHVH returns Zion*, precisely! Come and see: When Jerusalem below was destroyed and Assembly of Israel was banished, the Holy King removed Zion, drawing Him toward Himself, since Assembly of Israel had been expelled. Now that Assembly of Israel reveals Herself, He raises Her toward Himself; and when Assembly of Israel returns to Her place, then the Holy King will restore Zion to His place, to couple with one another. This is: *When YHVH returns Zion*. Then Israel are destined to declare, *This is my God, and I will enshrine Him* (Exodus 15:2). Similarly, it is written: *This is YHVH for whom we have hoped; let us rejoice and exult in His salvation!* (Isaiah 25:9)."[329]

YHVH is a man of war, YHVH is His name (Exodus 15:3).

Rabbi Abba opened, "*Therefore is it said in the Book of the Wars of YHVH*… (Numbers 21:14).[330] How deeply we should contemplate the decrees

of Torah! How carefully one should examine all its words! For you cannot find a word in Torah that does not allude to the supernal Holy Name, and you cannot find a word in Torah that does not contain many secrets, many reasons, many roots, many branches.[331] [56a]

"Here one should contemplate: *Therefore is it said in the Book of the Wars of YHVH*. Now, where is *the Book of the Wars of YHVH*? Well, the Companions have aroused as follows: Whoever wages war in Torah succeeds in spreading peace at the end of his words. All wars of Torah are peace and love, whereas all wars of the world are strife and destruction, as is written: *Therefore is it said in the Book of the Wars of YHVH*: את והב בסופה (*et vahev be-sufah*), *Waheb in a whirlwind*—namely, אהבה בסופה (*ahavah be-sofah*), love at its end. For there is no love and peace except this.[332]

"Still, a difficulty persists! *In the Book of the Wars of YHVH*—the verse should read *in the Torah of the Wars of YHVH*. Why *in the Book*? Well, that is a supernal mystery. The blessed Holy One has a place called *Book*, as is said: *Search in the Book of YHVH and read* (Isaiah 34:16). For all forces and powers that the blessed Holy One generates depend on that place and issue from there.[333]

"את והב בסופה (*Et vahev be-sufah*), *Waheb in a whirlwind* (Numbers 21:14). Who is *Waheb*? Well, all those forces and all those powers that the blessed Holy One generates depend on that *Book*. How does the blessed Holy One wage His wars? With one place at the end of rungs, called *vahev*, as is said: *The leech has two daughters*—הב הב (*hav, hav*), *'Give*!' *'Give*!' (Proverbs 30:15). *Be-sufah, in a whirlwind*—found בסוף (*be-sof*), at the end of, rungs. *Be-sufah*—called ים סוף (*yam suf*), the Red Sea, the sea that is סוף (*sof*), end, of all rungs.[334]

"ואת הנחלים ארנון (*Ve-et ha-neḥalim arnon*), *And the streams of Arnon* (Numbers 21:14)—*and with the streams* that appear and flow from a supernal place called Arnon. What is Arnon? Supernal coupling of love, never separating, as is

said: *A river issues from Eden* (Genesis 2:10). In these His roots are sunk, and branches spread—launching His wars everywhere, launching forces and powers, manifesting the dominion of His glory over all.[335]

"Come and see: When powers and wars of the blessed Holy One arouse, countless dazzling guardians rouse on every side.[336] Then, lances and swords are whetted, powers flare. The sea, agitated, her waves rising and falling; ships crossing the sea sail in every direction, disappearing. Lines of battle with catapult stones, lancemen, swordsmen—then, *Your arrows, sharpened*… (Psalms 45:6); the blessed Holy One gathers strength through His forces. Woe to those against whom the blessed Holy One rouses war! Then, *YHVH is a man of war* (Exodus 15:3).[337]

"From here—from those letters and from this verse—emerge lines of battle against the wicked, against enemies of the blessed Holy One. Letters are revealed to the Masters of Truth, and these matters have already been explained and discussed.[338]

"*YHVH is a man of war, YHVH is His name*. Since it is written *YHVH is a man of war*, don't we know that *YHVH is His name*? However, as is written: *And YHVH rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from YHVH out of heaven* (Genesis 19:24). All depends on one along with the other, as is said: *Heaven will expose his sin, and earth will rise up against him* (Job 20:27).[339]

"So, when the blessed Holy One arouses war in the world, those above and below are plucked from their links, as we have established. And in the time to come, the blessed Holy One intends to wage supreme and mighty war against the nations to glorify His Name, as is written: *YHVH will go forth and battle those nations*… (Zechariah 14:3), and similarly: *I will display My greatness and My holiness, and make Myself known*… (Ezekiel 38:23)."[340]

Pharaoh's chariots and his force He hurled into the sea, and the pick of his teams-of-three [*were drowned in the Red Sea*] (Exodus 15:4).[341] When the blessed Holy One arouses war, upper rungs and rungs below rouse, and then—*Pharaoh's chariots and his force He hurled into the sea*.[342]

Rabbi Yehudah opened, "*The waters saw You, O God; the waters saw You, they trembled* (Psalms 77:17). As Israel was about to cross the sea, the blessed Holy One said to the angel appointed over the sea, 'Divide your waters!'

"He said, 'Why?'

"He replied, 'So that My children can pass through you.'

"He said, 'A truly measured split for these and those!'

"He said, 'For this I made the sea when I created the world.'[343]

"What did the blessed Holy One do? He aroused His power and waters contracted, as is written: *The waters saw You, they trembled*. The blessed Holy One said to him, 'Slay these troops, then cast them out, then cover them'—as is written: *Pharaoh's chariots and his force He hurled into the sea*.... *The depths covered them* (Exodus 15:4–5).[344]

"*Pharaoh's chariots and his force.* Go and see how many chariots the blessed Holy One has formed above! How many forces, how many multitudes, all [56b] connected to one another! We have learned: All those chariots, interlinked, rungs upon rungs—and from the left side arouse dominant chariots. All, well-known chariots above.[345]

"As we have aroused concerning the firstborn of Pharaoh, he is one rung, whose power was slain by the blessed Holy One and who was severed from his mighty link and rung. Under his control: numerous chariots, numerous forces of princes from the left rank—some of them linked to a supernal site, some of them linked behind four millstones, as has been said. All of them were delivered to the judgment of Kingdom, who is called the Great Sea, to sever them from their rungs. And when they were broken above, all those below were broken, perishing in the lower sea, as

is written: *Pharaoh's chariots and his force He hurled into the sea—into the sea,* unspecified.[346]

"*And the pick of his teams-of-three were drowned in the Red Sea* (Exodus 15:4). *And the pick of his teams-of-three*—as has been said: *and teams-of-three, upon them all* (ibid. 14:7), all those rungs two and one, these above those, corresponding to the supernal pattern. All of them were handed over, to be severed from their dominion, from their links, these with those.[347]

"Come and see, as has been said: All those ten plagues that the blessed Holy One enacted in Egypt—all was one hand, for ten fingers interlaced, corresponding to ten utterances by which the blessed Holy One is named.[348] Afterward, corresponding to all, this at the sea—mighty, immense, overpowering, as is said: *The last one was severe* (Isaiah 8:23), as is written: *Pharaoh's chariots and his force He hurled into the sea*…. And in the time to come, the blessed Holy One intends to slay multitudes, quaestors, and commanders of Edom, as is written: *Who is this coming from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah—majestic in His attire?* (Isaiah 63:1)."[349]

Rabbi Yitsḥak opened, "*When He thunders, roar of waters in the heavens*… (Jeremiah 10:13).[350] We have learned: The blessed Holy One formed seven heavens, and in every single heaven are fixed stars, racing through every heaven, and above them all, Aravot. Each heaven traverses a distance of 200 years; its height, 500 years; and between each heaven, 500 years. This Aravot—the distance of its length, 1,500 years; its width, 1,500 years; and from its radiance, all those heavens shine.

"We have learned: Above Aravot, a heaven. Hooves of the holy living beings, their height like all of them. Above them, ankles of the living beings, like all of them; knees of the living beings like all of them, thighs of the living beings like all of them, buttocks of the living beings like all of them,

their torsos like all of them, their wings like all of them. What does this mean: 'like all of them'? Comparable to all of them.

"Every single limb of the living beings corresponds to seven depths, corresponds to seven palaces, corresponds to the distance from earth to heaven, corresponds to the distance from heaven to heaven. The measure of them all and their height is 25,000 parts of the measure of the blessed Holy One, as we have established.[351]

"One more heaven above the horns of the living beings, as is written: *An image above the heads of the living beings: a heaven* (Ezekiel 1:22).[352] Beneath, many chariots on the right and the left. Below the sea they all swim among fish of the sea, gathering in their splendor, four descending their rungs—all those chariots called by name. Below these, little fish swim along, rung upon rung, as is written: *This sea, vast and broad of reach, gliding creatures there innumerable, living beings small and great* (Psalms 104:25). We have established these matters.[353]

"From the lower left, prince of the Other Side, of those above. They descended, to be crushed by the mighty holy power, as we have established: *Pharaoh's chariots and his force* [*He hurled into the sea*]… (Exodus 15:4)."[354]

Your right hand, O YHVH, glorious in power. Your right hand, O YHVH, smashes the enemy (Exodus 15:6).

Rabbi Shim'on said, "When morning dawns and the doe stands firm, she conceives in her aspects, entering two hundred palaces of the King.[355] If a person engages [57a] in Torah at mid–night—when the north wind rouses and this doe aches to arouse in the world—and he accompanies her to stand before the King, then when morning dawns, a thread of love is drawn upon him.[356]

“He gazes at the sky—radiance of understanding of holy knowledge settles upon him, adorning that person, and all are in awe of him. Then this human is called ‘son of the blessed Holy One,’ ‘son of the King’s palace.’ No one can hinder him when he calls to the palace of the King. Of him is written *YHVH is near to all who call Him, to all who call Him in truth* (Psalms 145:18). What is *truth*? As we have established: *You will give truth to Jacob* (Micah 7:20), for he knows how to unify the Name fittingly, and this is the service of the Holy King.[357]

“One who knows how to unify the Holy Name sustains the unique nation in the world, as is written: *Who is like Your people Israel, a nation unique on earth?* (2 Samuel 7:23). Therefore they have established: If any priest does not know how to unify the Holy Name fittingly, his service is not service, for all depends upon him: higher service and lower service. One must direct heart and will, so that those above and those below may be blessed.[358]

“It is written: *When you come to appear before My face…* (Isaiah 1:12). If anyone comes to unify the Holy Name—without concentrating heart and will in awe, so that thereby those above and below will be blessed—his prayer is cast away, all proclaim evil against him, and the blessed Holy One declares: *When you come* לֶרָאוֹת פני (*le-ra’ot panai*), *to appear before My face,* [*who asked this of you, to trample My courts?*].

“The verse should read לִרְאוֹת (*lir’ot*), *to see.* Why לֶרָאוֹת (*le-ra’ot*), *to appear*? Well, all those faces of the King are concealed in the depth behind darkness, and all those who know how to unify the Holy Name fittingly split all those walls of darkness, and the faces of the King *appear,* illumining everything. When they appear and shine, all are blessed, those above and those below. Then blessings prevail in all the worlds; then, לֶרָאוֹת פני (*le-ra’ot panai*), *that My faces will appear*.[359]

"*Who asked this of you?* (Isaiah 1:12). What is implied? Well, one who comes to unify the supernal Name must unify from the crown of *this*—as is written: בזאת (*Be-zot*), *With this, shall Aaron enter the holy zone* (Leviticus 16:3)—so that those two, Righteous One and Righteousness, will couple as one in a coupling of blessing, so that all will be blessed through them. These are named according to what is written: *Happy is one You choose and bring near—he will dwell in Your courts!* (Psalms 65:5).[360]

"But if he comes to unify the Holy Name without concentrating with aspiration of the heart in awe, the blessed Holy One says, *Who asked this of you, to trample My courts?—to trample My courts,* surely, for blessings are not to be found in them! And not only are blessings not to be found in them, but Judgment dwells in them, to be found in all.[361]

"Come and see: From the right hand of the blessed Holy One arouse all radiance, all blessings, all joy. In it the left is comprised—just as in a human being there is right and left, and left is comprised in right, and right comprises all; and when right arouses, left arouses with it, for it is linked and included with it.[362]

"Come and see: When a person raises his hand in prayer, he directs his fingers above, as has been said, for it is written: *When Moses would raise his hand* (Exodus 17:11), since all depends on the right. And it is written: *Aaron raised* יָדָו (*yadav*), *his hands* (Leviticus 9:22)—ידו (*ydv*), deficiently. Then, he concentrates on blessing above.[363]

"But the blessed Holy One, not so. When He raises His right hand above, woe to those below, for all support and all blessings are withdrawn from them. How do we know? As is written: *You stretched out Your right hand—earth swallowed them* (Exodus 15:12). What is the meaning of *You stretched out Your right hand*? According to its translation: *You raised Your right hand.* Immediately, *earth swallowed them*.[364]

“When the right hand is present, the left is there with it, and then judgments do not dominate in the world. Why? Because the right is there with it. But if the right is withdrawn, the left is poised; then judgments arouse in the world, and Judgment prevails over all.”[365]

When Rabbi Shim’on reached this verse, he wept, for it is written: *He has withdrawn His right hand in the face of the enemy* (Lamentations 2:3). “Now, is it possible that *He has withdrawn His right hand*? Well, *He has withdrawn His right hand,* for the left hastened to descend into the world, and the right remained in another place.”[366]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “It is written: *The righteous one* אבד (*avad*), *loses* (Isaiah 57:1), and we have established the words: It is not written *The righteous one* נאבד (*ne’evad*), *is lost*, [57b] but rather *the righteous one avad, loses*. Of all those faces of the King, the only one who *loses* is *righteous one*. He *loses* in two aspects: one, that blessings no longer dwell within Him fittingly as before; and the other, that His mate—Assembly of Israel—has been distanced from Him. Consequently, *The righteous one loses* in all ways, more than all.[367] And of the time to come, it is written: *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king is coming to you, righteous* ונושע (*ve-nosha*), *and having salvation, is he* (Zechariah 9:9). It is not written *righteous* ומושיע (*u-moshi’a*), *and saving*, but rather *righteous ve-nosha, and saved, is he—saved* in all ways, as has been said.[368]

“*Your right hand, O YHVH*, נאדרי (*ne’dari*), *glorious, in power* (Exodus 15:6). Why *ne’dari*? The verse should read נאדר (*ne’dar*). However, when left comes to couple with it, then is written נאדֶרי (*ne’darei*), *glorious*—two. It is always so, for left appears with right, included with it.”[369]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “As we have established, and so it is, for a human being is actually divided. Why? In order to receive his mate, and they become one body truly. Similarly,

Your right hand—actually divided. Why? In order to receive the left. So it is with all, one with one. Thus, with one He smites and heals, as is written: *Your right hand, O YHVH, smashes the enemy* (Exodus 15:6).[370]

"Come and see: This song refers to that time and to the time to come, in the days when King Messiah arouses, as is written: *Your right hand, O YHVH*, תרעץ (*tir'ats*), *will smash, the enemy*. It is not written רעצת (*ra'atsta*), *You smashed*, but rather *tir'ats, You will smash*—corresponding to what is written previously: *He has withdrawn His right hand in the face of the enemy* (Lamentations 2:3); in that time, it *will smash the enemy*, in the time to come.[371]

"All similarly: תהרוס (*Taharos*), *You will shatter, those who rise against You* (Exodus 15:7). It is not written הרסת (*harasta*), *You shattered*, but rather *taharos, You will shatter*.

"*You will send forth Your fury, it will consume them like straw* (ibid.)—all, of the time to come.[372]

"*Your right hand, O YHVH, glorious in power*—at this time, in this world. *Your right hand, O YHVH, will smash the enemy*—in the time of King Messiah. *In Your abundant grandeur, You will shatter those who rise against You*—referring to the coming of Gog and Magog.[373] *You will send forth Your fury, it will consume them like straw*—referring to the revival of the dead, as is written: *Many of those who sleep in the dust will awake…* (Daniel 12:2)."[374]

Of that time, Rabbi Shim'on said, "Happy are those who will remain in the world! And who are they? Come and see: None of the inhabitants of the world will remain except for the circumcised, who have received the holy sign and entered the covenant in those two parts, as we have established—guarding that covenant and not inserting it where they should not. These will remain and be inscribed for eternal life. How do we know? As is written: *Whoever is left in Zion, who remains in Jerusalem, will be called holy, all who are inscribed for life…* (Isaiah 4:3). *Whoever is left in Zion, who remains in Jerusalem*—implying that whoever is

circumcised enters these two levels; and if he maintains that covenant fittingly and abides by it, of him is written *whoever is left in Zion, who remains in Jerusalem*. These will remain at that time. And with them, the blessed Holy One intends to renew the world, rejoicing with them. Of that time is written *May the glory of YHVH endure forever; may YHVH rejoice in His works!* (Psalms 104:31)."[375]

Rabbi Ḥiyya was traveling to visit Rabbi El'azar. He found him sitting next to Rabbi Shim'on son of Rabbi Yose son of Lekonya, his father-in-law.[376] As he raised his head, he saw Rabbi Ḥiyya.[377] He said, "*In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing on earth, whom YHVH of Hosts will bless, saying, 'Blessed be My people Egypt*, [*My handiwork Assyria, and My heritage Israel*]' (Isaiah 19:24–25). How foolish are the inhabitants of the world, who do not know or consider the words of Torah! For words of Torah…"[378]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said to him, "If so, look at what is written: *Her ways are ways of delightfulness* (Proverbs 3:17)!"[379]

He replied, "*Ways of* נעם (*no'am*), *delightfulness,* surely! What are *ways of delightfulness*? As is written: *to gaze upon no'am, the beauty of, YHVH* (Psalms 27:4), and they have already established what is meant by *beauty of YHVH.* Therefore, Torah and her ways issue from that *beauty*, those ways branching within it. Hence, *all her paths are peace* (Proverbs 3:17)."[380]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "We have learned: When the blessed Holy One gave the Torah to Israel, a light of that *beauty* radiated, crowning the blessed Holy One. From that *beauty* sparkled lusters of all worlds, [58a] all heavens. Of that moment is written *O daughters of Zion, come out and gaze upon King Solomon, upon the crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding, on the day of his heart's delight* (Song of Songs 3:11). At the time when the Temple was built, the blessed Holy One crowned Himself

with that crown and the King sat with the Bride. And ever since the Temple was destroyed, the blessed Holy One has not been crowned with His crowns, because that *beauty* has been concealed and hidden away."[381]

Rabbi El'azar said, "When Moses our teacher entered the cloud, as is written: *Moses entered the cloud*… (Exodus 24:18)—like a person moving in a realm of spirit. He encountered a magnificent angel—it has been taught that his name is Kemuel, appointed over twelve thousand ordained messengers. He sought to attack Moses. Moses opened with twelve engraved letters of the Holy Name, taught to him by the blessed Holy One at the bush, and he distanced himself twelve thousand parasangs from him.[382]

"Moses walked on through the cloud, his eyes flaming like coals of fire, until he encountered an angel more grand and honored than the first. It has been taught that his name is Hadraniel, and he is 1,060 myriads of parasangs above other angels; his voice traverses two hundred thousand heavens encircled by white fire. As soon as Moses saw him, he could not speak; he wanted to throw himself out of the cloud. The blessed Holy One said to him, 'Moses, are you not the one who spoke at length with Me at the bush for three days and sought to know the secret of the Holy Name and did not fear? And now you are afraid of one of My attendants?'[383]

"When Moses heard the voice of the blessed Holy One, he was strengthened. He opened his mouth with the seventy-two letters of the supernal Name. As soon as Hadraniel heard the letters of the Holy Name from the mouth of Moses, he trembled. He approached him and said, 'Happy is your share, son of a mortal, for to you has been revealed what has not been revealed to supernal angels.'[384]

"He accompanied him until he reached the fierce fire of Sandalfon. It has been taught: Sandalfon transcends his fellows by a distance of five hundred years, and he stands behind the curtain of his Master, weaving Him crowns out

of Israel's supplications of prayer. When that crown reaches the head of the Holy King, He accepts the prayer of Israel, and all the powers and legions tremble and shout: 'Blessed is the glory of *YHVH* from the dwelling of His presence!'[385]

"Hadraniel said to Moses, 'Moses, I cannot proceed with you, lest the fire of Sandalfon burn me.' At that moment Moses trembled, until the blessed Holy One grasped him, seated him before Him, and taught him Torah. He covered Moses with the light and radiance of that *beauty,* and Moses' face shone through all the heavens. All powers of heaven trembled before him when he descended with the Torah.[386]

"As soon as they sinned below, the blessed Holy One took away from Moses one thousand parts of that radiance. At that moment supernal angels and all those legions sought to burn Moses. When the blessed Holy One said to him *Go, get down! For your people has acted corruptly* (Exodus 32:7), Moses trembled and could not speak, until finally he multiplied prayers and supplications before the blessed Holy One.[387]

"He said to him, 'Moses, grasp My throne!' Finally the blessed Holy One rebuked all those powers, and Moses grasped the two tablets of stone and brought them down. This is what is written: *A wise man went up to the city of the mighty, and brought down the strength of its trust* (Proverbs 21:22). From that radiance remaining in him, Moses' face sparkled. Now, if with this one remaining so, they could not gaze at his face, then with the one withdrawn from him, all the more so!"[388]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "*Your right hand, O YHVH, glorious in power* (Exodus 15:6)—Torah. *Your right hand, O YHVH, smashes the enemy* (ibid.)—for nothing in the world breaks the power of other nations except when Israel is occupied with Torah. For whenever Israel is occupied with Torah, the power and strength of the enemies of Israel are broken.

Therefore Torah is called *strength*, as is said: *YHVH gives strength to His people* (Psalms 29:11).[389]

"When Israel is not occupied with Torah, the power of other nations is fortified and they rule over them and issue unbearable decrees against them. Because of this, Israel is exiled and scattered among the nations, as is written: [58b] *Why is the land ruined?... YHVH said, 'Because they have forsaken My Torah'* (Jeremiah 9:11–12). For whenever Israel engages in Torah, the power and strength of all nations is broken, as is written: *Your right hand, O YHVH, smashes the enemy.*"[390]

Rabbi El'azar said, "Certainly so! And whenever the voice of Israel is heard in synagogues and houses of study, as we have learned, *The voice is the voice of Jacob*—and if not, *the hands are the hands of Esau* (Genesis 27:22), as we have established."[391]

In Your abundant grandeur, You shatter those who rise against You; You send forth Your fury, it consumes them like straw (Exodus 15:7).

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah opened, "*Why, YHVH, do You stand afar, and hide in times of trouble?* (Psalms 10:1). When sins of the world prove decisive, the blessed Holy One ascends above and humans cry and shed tears, and there is no one who cares for them. Why? Because He has ascended above, above, and returning is denied to them. Then is written וברוב גאונך (*uv-rov ge'onekha*), *In Your abundant eminence, You shatter those who rise against You*."[392]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "This verse refers to the time when the blessed Holy One will clothe Himself in גאותא (*ga'uta*), grandeur, over the nations who will gather against Him, as is written: *Princes conspire together against YHVH and against His anointed* (Psalms 2:2). It has been taught: Seventy quaestors from every direction are destined to

gather at that time along with legions of the whole world and wage war against Jerusalem, the Holy City, and conspire against the blessed Holy One. What do they say? 'Let us rise against the Patron first, and then against His people and His temple.'[393]

"Then the blessed Holy One will laugh at them, as is written: *He who sits in heaven will laugh; YHVH will mock them* (Psalms 2:4). At that time the blessed Holy One will don grandeur against them and eliminate them from the world, as is written: *This will be the plague with which YHVH will smite all the nations that warred against Jerusalem…* (Zechariah 14:12)."[394]

Rabbi Abba said in the name of Rav Yeisa Sava, and so said Rabbi Shim'on, "The blessed Holy One will revive all those kings who besieged Israel and Jerusalem—Rufinus, Nebuchadnezzar, Sennacherib, and all the other kings who destroyed His house—and enthrone them as before, and all the other nations will gather with them, and the blessed Holy One will exact retribution from them openly around Jerusalem, as is written: *all the nations that warred against Jerusalem* (ibid.). It is not written *that will war*, but rather *that warred*. Then is written: *In Your abundant grandeur, You will shatter those who rise against You*—this refers to the time to come, and this song is a song of eternity.[395]

"*By the breath of Your nostrils, waters heaped up…* (Exodus 15:8)—in that time. Thus it includes that time, the time of King Messiah, the time of Gog and Magog, and the time of the world-to-come, joy of all worlds.[396]

"*The enemy said, 'I'll pursue, overtake, divide the plunder…'* (Exodus 15:9). *The enemy said*—the prince appointed over the Egyptians. When he was granted dominion over Israel, he thought they would be destroyed under his power; but the blessed Holy One remembered the mountains of the world, who were protecting them.[397]

"Now, do not say, 'He alone.' Rather, all those princes appointed over other nations—when they are granted

authority and dominion over Israel, they all want Israel to be destroyed under them. Therefore, the nations under the control of those appointees all issue decrees to destroy them—but the blessed Holy One protects them. When Moses saw this, he began to praise the blessed Holy One and said, *Who is like You among the gods, O YHVH? Who is like You, majestic in holiness…?* (Exodus 15:11).”[398]

He said, “One grand tree, supernal and mighty, from which are nourished those above and below. It is bordered by twelve boundaries, fortified by four sides of the world circling in their sites.[399]

“Seventy branches rise within it, nourished from it; from its roots’ essence they suck all around. Those branches appearing in the tree—as the time of each branch’s dominion arrives, they all seek to destroy everything; but the trunk of the tree, essence of all those branches, dominates them, and to this Israel is linked.[400]

“When dominion reaches them, that [59a] share of Israel, trunk of the tree, seeks to protect them and provide peace among them all. Therefore, seventy bulls of the festival, to grant peace to seventy branches in the tree.[401]

“Consequently, *Who is like You* באלים (*ba-elim*), *among the gods, O YHVH?* (Exodus 15:11). What is *ba-elim*? A tree, as is said: *For you will be ashamed* מאילים (*me-eilim*), *of the terebinths*, [*that you desired*] (Isaiah 1:29). It is a tree that they worshiped—a certain case that they carved within it—and it was called *eilim*, a tree. *Who is like You*?—acting as You do, having compassion upon all. *Who is like You?*—among all surrounding the tree. For although He rules, He protects all, protecting all the rest, not wanting to finish them off.[402]

“*Who is like You, majestic in holiness?* (Exodus 15:11), in that supernal power called *holiness—in holiness*, precisely!—and it is called Power of *YHVH,* Beauty of *YHVH*. These matters have already been established.”[403]

Who is like You among the gods, O YHVH?[404]

Rabbi Yose opened, "*I have seen all the deeds that are done under the sun; and look, all is* הבל (*hevel*), *vanity, and striving after wind* (Ecclesiastes 1:14).[405] King Solomon, who ascended in wisdom beyond all inhabitants of the world, how could he say that all deeds are *vanity and striving after wind*? Does this include even an act of righteousness, of which is written *The work of righteousness will be peace* (Isaiah 32:17)? Rather, as they have established: *All the deeds that are done under the sun,* it is written; the act of righteousness is different, for it is above the sun.[406]

"*And look, all is hevel, vanity, and striving after wind* (Ecclesiastes 1:14). What does this indicate? If you say that *all is hevel* inheres in a mystery of wisdom—as we have established in connection with the verse הבל הבלים (*havel havalim*), *breath of breaths* (ibid. 1:2), those being *havalim, breaths*, above—then what will you say of this that is written: *All is hevel and striving after wind*? And look, this is described as being *under the sun* (ibid., 14)![407]

"However, they have established this as follows, and so it is. Come and see: When actions prove worthy below, and a person contemplates the service of the Holy King, the act that he performs turns into a *breath* above. And there is no *breath* without a voice—rising, crowned above, becoming an advocate before the blessed Holy One.[408]

"Every action in which a person engages that is not in the service of the blessed Holy One turns into a *breath* that goes drifting through the world. And when the person's soul departs, that *breath* whirls it through the world like a stone in a sling, as is written: *The soul of your enemies He will sling from the hollow of a sling* (1 Samuel 25:29). Who *will sling*? That *breath* conducting it around the world. So, everything done under the sun that is not in the service of

the blessed Holy One turns into a *breath*—but it is breaking of spirit, for it breaks the spirit, rising and falling in the world, as is written: *breath* ורעות רוח (*ur'ut ruaḥ*), *and shattering of spirit* (Ecclesiastes 1:14).[409]

"But whatever is service of his Lord is called 'above the sun' and becomes a holy *breath.* This is seed sown by a person in that world. What is its name? Righteousness, as is written: *Sow for yourselves righteousness* (Hosea 10:12). This conducts a person when his soul departs from him, raising him to a place where supernal glory is found, to be bound in the bundle of life, as is written: *Your righteousness will march before you* (Isaiah 58:8)—leading you, raising you. To where? To the place of which is written *the glory of YHVH will gather you in* (ibid.).[410]

"All those souls conducted by that holy *breath* are gathered in by the one called *glory of YHVH*, enwrapped within it, as is written: *The glory of YHVH will gather you in*. This is called 'tranquility of spirit'; but the other is called *re'ut ruaḥ, shattering of spirit*. Happy are the righteous, for all their actions are above the sun, and they sow deeds, sowing righteousness, making them worthy of the world that is coming! Of this is written *For you, in awe of My name, the sun of righteousness will rise, with healing in its wings* (Malachi 3:20)."[411]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Come and see: At first, when the Temple was built below, it was built in judgment and anger, as is written: *This house has aroused My anger and My wrath* [*from the day that they built it until this day*] (Jeremiah 32:31), for it occupies a place of Judgment. In the time to come, the blessed Holy One will build and establish it on another, higher rung, called Righteousness, as is written: *In righteousness you will be established* (Isaiah 54:14). Therefore it will endure, and its actual name [59b] will be Righteousness. How do we know? As is written: *This is the name by which he will be called: YHVH Our Righteousness* (Jeremiah 23:6)."[412]

You stretched out Your right hand—earth swallowed them (Exodus 15:12). As has been said, *You raised Your right hand*.[413]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "They have already aroused what this means: When the blessed Holy One drew the dead Egyptians out of the depths, He said to the earth, 'Gather them in.'… Finally, the blessed Holy One stretched out His right hand toward her and swore to her; then earth swallowed them, as is written: *earth swallowed them*."[414]

Rabbi El'azar said, "*You stretched out Your right hand*—separating the left from it, so that judgment would be executed against them.[415]

"*You led in Your love the people You redeemed*. (Exodus 15:13)—as is written: *Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your face, for You delighted in them* (Psalms 44:4). *Your right hand*—*Gedullah*, Greatness.[416]

"*You guided them in Your might* (Exodus, ibid.)—*Gevurah*, Power; *Your arm* (Psalms, ibid.).[417]

"*To Your holy abode* (Exodus, ibid.)—Righteousness, as is written: *and the light of Your face*. All appear in the verse.[418]

"אימתה (*Eimatah*), *Terror, and fear fell upon them* (Exodus 15:16). *Eimatah, Terror*—the verse should read אימה (*eimah*), *terror*; why *eimatah*? For you cannot find a word or a letter in the Torah that does not contain supernal secrets. Why *eimatah*?"

Rabbi Shim'on said, "This means the fear of *Shekhinah*.[419]

"Similarly, תביאמו (*Tevi'emo*), *You will bring them, You will plant them on the mount of Your heritage*… (Exodus 15:17). *Tevi'emo*—the verse should read תביאם (*tevi'em*), *You will bring them*; why *tevi'emo*? Well, Holy Spirit spoke concerning that later generation circumcised by Joshua and in whom was revealed the holy insignia of the name of the blessed Holy One. For these were linked with ו (*vav*) and these were worthy of inheriting the land, as is written: *Your people, all of them righteous, will inherit the land forever* (Isaiah

60:21). Whoever is circumcised and in whom is revealed the holy insignia—and who guards it—is called 'righteous.' Therefore, *they will inherit the land forever*. So, תביאמו (*Tevi'emo*), *You will bring them*—an extra ו (*vav*)—*You will bring* those who are linked with *vav*.[420]

"ותטעמו (*Ve-titta'emo*), *You will plant them*—as is said: *sprout of My planting* (Isaiah 60:21)—those who are linked with *vav*; for those later ones the word arouses. You cannot find a word in the Torah, or a small letter in the whole Torah, that does not contain a secret of supernal secrets and holy reasons. Happy is the share of those who know them!"[421] [60a]

We have learned: Rabbi Abba said, "Happy is the share of those who are worthy of chanting this song in this world, for they will prove worthy of chanting it in the world that is coming! This song is composed of twenty-two engraved letters and ten utterances, all inscribed in the Holy Name, all consummation of the Holy Name. We have already aroused these matters."[422]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "As Israel was standing at the sea and singing the song, the blessed Holy One revealed Himself to them with all His chariots and forces, so that they would know their King who had performed all those miracles and mighty deeds. Every single one of them knew and perceived what other prophets of the world did not.[423]

"For if you say they did not know or grasp supernal wisdom, from this song you will see that they all perceived wisdom and knew and sang. Otherwise, how could they all say uniform words, not deviating from each other? Whatever this one said, that one said, no word preceding another—rather, all of them in a single rhythm, Holy Spirit in the mouth of each one, and words all enunciated as if issuing from one mouth.[424]

"Even those in their mothers' wombs sang the song all in unison, and they all saw what the prophet Ezekiel did not

see. Thus they all gazed as if seeing eye-to-eye. And when they concluded the words their souls were all sweetly drunk, and they yearned to see and gaze; they did not want to journey from there, out of great longing.[425]

"At that moment, Moses said to the blessed Holy One, 'Your children, out of great longing to gaze upon You, refuse to journey from the sea.' What did the blessed Holy One do? He concealed His glory away in the wilderness, where it became manifest and yet did not. Moses told Israel many times to journey from there, but they refused, until he showed them the splendor of the glory in the wilderness, and they were immediately desirous. They did not want to journey until Moses grasped them and showed them the radiant glory of the blessed Holy One in the wilderness. Then, out of their great longing and desire to gaze, Moses caused them to journey, as is written: *Moses made Israel journey from the Red Sea, and they went out to the Wilderness of Shur* (Exodus 15:22). What is *the Wilderness of* שׁוּר (*Shur*), *Shur*? The wilderness where they sought to gaze upon the radiant glory of the Holy King. Therefore it is called *the Wilderness of Shur*—there, gazing.[426]

"*They went three days in the wilderness and did not find water* (Exodus 15:22). *Water* is nothing but Torah, as is written: *Ho, everyone who is thirsty, go to water* (Isaiah 55:1)."[427]

Rabbi Yeisa said, "Now, who gave them Torah here? Since until now Torah had not been given!"[428]

Rabbi El'azar replied, "They went out into the wilderness to gaze, but the blessed Holy One removed His radiant glory from there; they went to gaze upon Him but found nothing. We have learned that the blessed Holy One is called Torah, and *water* is nothing but Torah, and Torah is nothing but the blessed Holy One."[429]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "While they were walking in the wilderness, the alien dominion of other nations appeared to them, encountering them. Israel saw that it was not the

radiant glory of their King, as is written: *They came to Marah and could not drink water from Marah*. Why? *For it was bitter* (Exodus 15:23)—their souls were no longer sweetly drunk. Furthermore, he came to accuse them.[430]

"What is written? *He cried out to YHVH, and YHVH showed him a tree* (Exodus 15:25) [60b]—and *tree* is nothing but Torah, as is written: *She is a tree of life to those who grasp her* (Proverbs 3:18); and Torah is nothing but the blessed Holy One."[431]

Rabbi Abba said, "*Tree* is nothing but the blessed Holy One, as is written: *For the human is a tree of the field* (Deuteronomy 20:19)—*a tree of the field,* surely: field of holy apples! When the radiant glory of their King appeared to them, then *he threw it into the water, and the water turned sweet* (Exodus 15:25). What is the meaning of *the water turned sweet*? That the accuser became an advocate."[432]

Rabbi Abba said, "Come and see: At first, Israel entered into the covenant of the blessed Holy One and did not enter properly. Why? Because they were circumcised but the holy insignia was not revealed. As soon as they arrived here, what is written? *There He set him statute and law* (Exodus 15:25)—there Israel entered into two holy parts, through that revealing by which their sign was revealed, called *statute and law*. חק (*Ḥoq*), *Statute*—as is said: *She provides food for her household* וחק (*ve-ḥoq*), *and a portion, for her maidens* (Proverbs 31:15). *And law*—as is said: *a law of the God of Jacob* (Psalms 81:5).[433]

"*And there* נסהו (*nissahu*), *He raised him* (Exodus 15:25)—by that holy sign.[434] "In the Book of Rav Yeiva Sava, he said a word about that holy staff.[435]

"*He said, 'If you really heed the voice of YHVH your God… for I am YHVH your healer'* (Exodus 15:26). *He said*—what does this mean: *He said*? It is not written who said this. Well, the blessed Holy One."[436]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah said, “This implies anonymous speech. What is anonymous speech? As is written: *To Moses He said, ‘Ascend to YHVH’* (Exodus 24:1). It is not written who said this.”[437]

Rabbi Yose said, “It is implied by what is written: *He cried out to YHVH, and YHVH showed him a tree* (Exodus 15:25)—from here is implied *He said* and who spoke the word.[438]

“*The voice of YHVH your God*—the verse should read *My voice*. However, the voice that they had entered.”[439]

Rabbi Abba said, “After the holy insignia was revealed in them, they entered two holy parts, as has been said. And having entered these two, they entered two other parts; for upon contemplating matters, two others join these, not withholding blessings. Thus through these they reached the Holy King.[440]

“From the site of the verse the matter is inferred, for it is written: *He said, ‘If you really heed’* (Exodus 15:26). *He said*—Holy King. And what did He say? *If you really heed the voice of YHVH your God*—Assembly of Israel.[441]

“*And do what is right in His eyes* (ibid.)—Righteous One.[442]

“*And hearken to His commands* (ibid.)—*Netsaḥ*, Endurance.

“*And keep all His statutes* (ibid.)—*Hod*, Splendor.

“Having entered these, they reached the Holy King. What is written afterward? *All the sickness that I imposed upon Egypt I will not impose upon you, for I am YHVH your healer* (ibid.). *I am YHVH*—Holy King.

“Implying that whoever guards this holy sign reaches the supernal King. How is this implied? Those two in which seed and holy anointing oil gather—they cast it into the mouth of the phallus; so they link as one, and the Holy King above them, with whom they join. Therefore, one who enters these two and guards them is linked with two others, entering them, and then reaches the Holy King.”[443]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “Certainly! For one who attains Righteous One attains *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*—these are three by which Assembly of Israel is blessed. One who attains them attains the Holy King, entering all four.[444]

“Corresponding to these four, guarding this holy sign from four things: guarding Assembly of Israel, protection from a menstruant; guarding Righteous One, from a slave-girl; guarding *Netsaḥ,* from a Gentile woman; guarding *Hod*, from a prostitute.[445]

“Therefore, *the voice of YHVH your God* (Exodus 15:26)—Assembly of Israel. How does Israel merit welcoming *Shekhinah*? By this protection. We have learned: *Do not approach a woman in her menstrual impurity to expose her nakedness* (Leviticus 18:19). What does this mean: *to expose her nakedness*? Assembly of Israel. By this are connected and linked other elements to which Assembly of Israel is joined, as we have already established.[446]

“*And do what is right in His eyes* (Exodus 15:26)—Righteous One, as is written: *The eyes of YHVH are upon the righteous* (Psalms 34:16)—to be wary of a slave-girl. [61a] We have already established this matter, as is written: *and a slave-girl supplanting her mistress* (Proverbs 30:23)—causing Righteous One to cleave to *a slave-girl.*[447]

“*And hearken to His commands* (Exodus 15:26)—*Netsaḥ*, being wary not to betray it, not to insert this sign in a Gentile woman, thereby betraying *Netsaḥ*, for it is written: *Moreover,* נצח (*netsaḥ*), *the Eternal One of, Israel does not deceive* (1 Samuel 15:29). Whoever guards this fulfills His commandments, as is written: *For you shall not bow to another god* (Exodus 34:14).[448]

“*And keep all His statutes* (ibid. 15:26)—*Hod*, to be wary of a prostitute.

“This follows what we have learned: Rabbi Yehudah said, ‘What is the meaning of the verse *Gird your sword upon the thigh, O mighty one, your splendor and your*

majesty (Psalms 45:4)? Well, whoever arms himself, setting the fear of the sharp mighty sword in front of him.[449]

"'*Upon the thigh*. What is this? The holy sign, as is said: *Place your hand under my thigh* (Genesis 24:2).[450]

"'Alternatively, *Gird your sword upon the thigh, O mighty one*—that is to say, arm yourself and overpower your evil impulse, which is *your sword*.

"'*Upon the thigh*—concerning that holy sign, to guard it. And if one guards it, then he is called *mighty one*, and the blessed Holy One clothes him in His garments. Who are the garments of the blessed Holy One? *Hod* and *Netsaḥ*, as is written: *You are clothed in* הוד (*hod*), *splendor, and majesty* (Psalms 104:1). Here too, *your splendor and your majesty* (ibid. 45:4). Then, a person cleaves to the Holy King fittingly.'[451]

"Continuing from here, *all the sickness that I*—the Holy King—*imposed upon Egypt I will not impose upon you, for I am YHVH your healer* (Exodus 15:26).

"Therefore, He admonished them about that very element that He gave and inscribed in them, and nothing more; for until now, Torah had not been given to them. Rather, once it is written *There He set him statute and law, and there He tested him* (Exodus 15:25), immediately: *If you really heed the voice of YHVH your God*… (ibid., 26).[452]

"Come and see: When He wanted to admonish Israel about Torah, He drew them with numerous words, with many allurements of love, like a person drawing his son to school.[453]

"Come and see: The blessed Holy One did not want to give them the Torah until they drew near Him. How did they do so? By uncovering this sign, as has been said."[454]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Israel did not approach Mount Sinai until they entered the portion of Righteous One, attaining it. How do we know? As is written: *On this day they came to the Wilderness of Sinai* (Exodus 19:1)—*on this day*, precisely! And it is written: *In that day they will say:*

Look, this is our God; we waited for Him, and He saved us! This is YHVH for whom we have waited; let us rejoice and exult in His salvation! (Isaiah 25:9).”[455]

YHVH said to Moses, "Look, I am about to rain down bread for you from heaven…" (Exodus 16:4).[456]

Rabbi Yehudah opened, "*Happy is one who considers the poor; in time of trouble YHVH will deliver him* (Psalms 41:2). This verse we have established: When a person is lying in his sickbed, he is imprisoned in the royal dungeon, his head in a neck-iron, his feet in fetters, numerous ravagers guarding him on this side and that; his limbs in distress, attacking one another; food withdrawn from him.[457]

"At that time, someone is appointed for him. Who? A guardian, to plead in his favor before the King. At that moment, happy is the person who visits him and teaches him a way to be saved from judgment, as is written: *Happy is one* המשכיל אל דל (*ha-maskil el dal*), *who enlightens the weak*. How can he save him? By teaching him ways of life, to return before his Lord. Then a guardian is formed for him above. What is his reward? *In time of trouble YHVH will deliver him*.[458]

"Alternatively, *Happy is one who considers the poor*—how potent is the reward of the poor before the blessed Holy One."[459]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "I am astonished at this verse that is written: *For YHVH hears the needy* (Psalms 69:34). Now, does He hear *the needy* and no one else?"

Rabbi Shim'on replied, "Because they are closer to the King, as is written: *A broken and crushed heart, O God, You will not spurn* (Psalms 51:19), and there is no one in the world as brokenhearted as a poor person."[460]

Rabbi Shim'on said further, "Come and see: All inhabitants of the world appear before the Holy King in

body and soul, while a poor person appears only in soul, and the blessed Holy One is closer to the soul than to the body."[461]

There was a poor man in the neighborhood of Rabbi Yeisa, and no one showed him any concern, and he was ashamed to beg from others. [61b] One day he became ill. Rabbi Yeisa came in to visit him and heard a voice saying, "Whirling scale, whirling scale! A soul is flying to me, yet its days have not arrived. Woe to the inhabitants of his city, for none of them can restore his soul to him!"[462]

Rabbi Yeisa rose and poured into his mouth fig juice mixed with palm stalk from a tub. Sweat broke out on his face, and his spirit returned to him.[463]

Afterward, he came and asked him.[464] He said, "By your life, Rabbi! My soul had left me, and they brought it before the King's throne, and it wanted to remain there. But the blessed Holy One wanted to confer merit upon you, and they have proclaimed about you: 'Rabbi Yeisa's spirit is destined to ascend and be bound in a certain holy chamber, which the Companions will arouse on earth.' Three thrones have already been prepared, standing ready for you and your fellows." From that day on, the inhabitants of the city took care of him.[465]

Another poor man passed before Rabbi Yitsḥak with half a *ma'ah* of silver in his hand.[466] He said to Rabbi Yitsḥak, "Restore my and my children's and my household's souls."[467]

He said, "How can I restore your souls, when I only have half a *ma'ah*?"

He replied, "With this I will complete it, with the other half that I have." He took it out and gave it to him.[468]

He was shown in a dream that he was passing by the shore of the Great Sea, and they were about to throw him in. He saw Rabbi Shim'on, who was stretching out his hand toward him, and that poor man came and pulled him out and put him in the hands of Rabbi Shim'on and he was

saved. When he awoke, this verse fell into his mouth: *Happy is one who considers the poor; in time of trouble YHVH will deliver him* (Psalms 41:2).[469]

Come and see: Every single day dew trickles from the Holy Ancient One to the Short-Tempered One, and the whole Orchard of Holy Apples is blessed. Some of that dew is drawn to those below, and holy angels are nourished by it, each and every one according to his diet, as is written: *Man ate the bread of the mighty* (Psalms 78:25), for of that food Israel ate in the wilderness.[470]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Some people are nourished by it now. And who are they? These Companions, engaging in Torah day and night. Now, would you imagine, from that very food? Rather, resembling that food, two balancing one.[471]

"Come and see: When Israel entered and cleaved to the King by revealing the holy insignia, they became worthy of eating other bread—higher than at first, when they went out Egypt, entering the bread called *matstsah*. Now they entered and proved worthy of eating other, higher bread from a high place, as is written: *Look, I am about to rain down bread for you from heaven* (Exodus 16:4)—*from heaven*, really! At that time it appeared to Israel from this place.[472]

"Companions engaging in Torah are nourished from another, higher place. What is it? As is written: *Wisdom gives life to its possessors* (Ecclesiastes 7:12)—a higher place."[473]

Rabbi El'azar said to him, "If so, why are they weaker than other inhabitants of the world? They should be stronger and more powerful!"[474]

He replied, "You have asked well! Come and see: All foods of the inhabitants of the world derive from above. The food that comes from heaven and earth is food for the whole world; it is coarse and dense.[475] Food coming from higher above is food that comes in Judgment, from a place

where Judgment prevails; it is finer food.[476] The food that appeared for Israel at that time—from a high place called *heaven*—is finer food, entering the soul most deeply, dissociated ever more from the body, called *ethereal bread* (Numbers 21:5).[477]

"Highest food of all is food of the Companions, those engaging in Torah, who eat food of spirit and soul-breath—not eating food of the body at all—namely, from a high place, precious beyond all, called Wisdom. Therefore the body of the Companions is weaker than inhabitants of the world, for they do not eat food of the body at all. They eat food of spirit and soul-breath, from a distant, supernal place, [62a] most precious of all. So that food is refined of the refined, finest of all. Happy is their portion, as is written: *Wisdom gives life to its possessors* (Ecclesiastes 7:12)! Happy is the share of the body that can be nourished by food of the soul!"[478]

Rabbi El'azar said to him, "Certainly so! But how can these foods be found now?"[479]

He replied, "You have certainly asked well! Come and see—this is clarity of the matter: The first food is food of the whole world, that which derives from heaven and earth, food for all.

"Food that is higher—that which is finer, deriving from a place where Judgment prevails, called צדק (*Tsedeq*), Justice. This is food of the poor. Mystery of the matter: One who fulfills a poor person adds one letter to it, transforming it into צדקה (*Tsedaqah*), Charity. This is: *A man of kindness benefits his soul* (Proverbs 11:17)—implying rendering kindness, for it dwells in Judgment and is fulfilled by *kindness*, becoming Compassion.[480]

"Food higher than these is a supernal, precious food, from a place called *heaven*. This is finer than all of them, and it is food of the sick, as is written: *YHVH will sustain him on the bed of illness* (Psalms 41:4)—*YHVH*, precisely! Why? Because the sick are nourished only by the actual food of

the blessed Holy One. And what is that? Fat and blood, as is written: *to offer Me fat and blood* (Ezekiel 44:15). This is food from the place called *heaven*—supernal, precious, finest of all.[481]

"Supernal, holy, precious food—food of spirit and soul-breath—is food from a supernal distant place. This is food of the Companions engaging in Torah, food coming from supernal Wisdom. Why? Because Torah issues from supernal Wisdom, and those who engage in Torah enter the essence of her roots; so their food derives from that supernal holy place."[482]

Rabbi El'azar came and kissed his hands. He said, "Happy is my portion, that I understand these words! Happy is the portion of the righteous, who engage in Torah day and night, rendering them worthy in this world and in the world that is coming, *for she is your life and the length of your days* (Deuteronomy 30:20)!"[483]

Look, I am about to rain down bread for you from heaven (Exodus 16:4).

Rabbi Yose opened, "*You open Your hand and satisfy every living thing with favor* (Psalms 145:16).[484] What is written above? *The eyes of all wait for You* [*and You give them their food at its proper time*] (ibid., 15). All those inhabitants of the world await, lifting their eyes to the blessed Holy One. Therefore, every single day all those scions of faith should request their food from the blessed Holy One, offering their prayers for it. Why? Because whoever offers his prayer to the blessed Holy One for his nourishment causes that tree containing all nourishment to be blessed every day through him. The meaning of the matter is: *Blessed be* YHVH *day by day* (Psalms 68:20). Even if one has it, he should make a request before the blessed Holy One, offering his prayer for food each day, so that blessings will prevail every single day above.[485]

“Therefore, a person should not cook food on one day for another day, prolonging a day to another day, as is written: *The people shall go out and gather each day’s share on its day* (Exodus 16:4)—*each day’s share on its day*, precisely! Except on Sabbath eve for Sabbath, as we have established.[486]

“Consequently, the blessed Holy One is full of blessings every single day. Then is written: *You open Your hand and satisfy every living thing with favor*. What is *favor*? That which appears from the Holy Ancient One, *favor* issuing from Him so that food will be available for all. Whoever requests food for every single day is called ‘son of faith,’ a son through whom blessings are found above.”[487]

Rabbi Abba opened, “*YHVH delights in those in awe of Him, those awaiting His faithful love* (Psalms 147:11). How carefully should people walk in the ways of the Holy King and in the ways of Torah, so that blessings prevail everywhere, above and below! For we have learned: What is the meaning of the verse *Israel in whom I glory* (Isaiah 49:3)? *I glory,* indeed! What does this imply? That because of [62b] Israel below, the blessed Holy One is glorified above. What is the glory that He dons? Tefillin. Further, colors combining gloriously.[488]

“It has been taught: רוצה יהוה את יראיו (*Rotseh YHVH et yere’av*), *YHVH delights those in awe of Him*. Why *YHVH delights et yere’av, those in awe of Him*? The verse should read *YHVH delights* ביראיו (*biyre’av*), *in those in awe of Him*. However, *YHVH delights those in awe of Him*—namely, He generates that delight, and with it the blessed Holy One delights *those in awe of Him*. Who are *those in awe of Him*, for whom He generates this delight? The verse goes on to say: *those awaiting His faithful love*—those who wait every single day to request their food from the blessed Holy One, as implied by *those awaiting His faithful love*.[489]

“Rabbi Yeisa Sava would not prepare a meal each day until he offered his prayer before the blessed Holy One for

food. He said, ‘I will prepare the meal when it is provided from the house of the King.’ After offering his prayer, he would wait one hour and then say, ‘The time has arrived for it to be provided from the house of the King. From this moment on, prepare the meal!’ This is the way of those in awe of the blessed Holy One, those who fear sin.[490]

“The wicked who walk crookedly in the ways of Torah—what is written of them? *Woe to those who rise early in the morning to chase after liquor* (Isaiah 5:11). Therefore, *YHVH delights those in awe of Him, those awaiting His faithful love—His faithful love*, precisely! By this, those scions of faith are recognized every single day, as is written: *they shall gather each day’s share on its day* (Exodus 16:4)—not for another day. *So that I may test them whether they will follow My Torah or not* (ibid.)—here those scions of faith are recognized, those who walk straight in the ways of Torah.”[491]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “From here: *A righteous one eats to satisfy his soul…* (Proverbs 13:25).”[492]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “Come and see: Before the blessed Holy One gave the Torah to Israel, He distinguished between the scions of faith and the wicked who were not scions of faith and would not abide by the Torah. How did He differentiate them? By the manna, as has been said. All those who were found to be scions of faith were designated by the blessed Holy One with an insignia of the crown of *Ḥesed*, as is said: *those awaiting* חסדו (*ḥasdo*), *His faithful love*—as is written: *so that I may test them whether they will follow My Torah or not*. All those who were not found to be scions of faith were deprived of this supernal crown, and the manna declared: *The belly of the wicked will be empty* (Proverbs 13:25). Even so, *he who took more had no extra and he who took less had no lack; each according to his eating had they gathered* (Exodus 16:18).[493]

“It has been taught: At that time, Israel was perfected below, corresponding to the pattern above, as we have

established.[494]

"*They came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water* [*and seventy date palms…*] (Exodus 15:27). The holy tree was arranged with twelve boundaries on four sides of the world, fortified by seventy branches, all corresponding to the pattern above.[495]

"At that moment, holy dew trickled from the Concealed Ancient One, filling the head of the Short-Tempered One, the place called Heaven. Some of that dew of supernal holy light flowed and descended below, and as it descended, it dispersed into frozen flakes congealing below, as is written: *fine as frost on the ground* (Exodus 16:14).[496]

"All those scions of faith went out and gathered and blessed the supernal Name over it. That manna emitted a fragrance like all the spices of the Garden of Eden, since it had flowed through there in descending. Once they placed it in front of them, they tasted whatever taste they desired and blessed the supernal King. Then it was blessed in each one's belly, and he would contemplate and know above, gazing upon supernal Wisdom. Therefore they were called Generation of Knowledge. These were scions of faith—and to them was given Torah, to contemplate her and know her ways.[497]

"Of those who were not found to be scions of faith, what is written? *The people would roam around and gather it…* (Numbers 11:8).[498] What is the meaning of שטו (*shatu*), *would roam around*? They acquired שטותא (*shatuta*), foolishness, because they were not scions of faith. What is written of them? *They would grind it between millstones or pound it in a mortar…* (ibid.). Who made them go to all this trouble? [63a] They themselves, not being scions of faith.

"Similarly, those who have no faith in the blessed Holy One refuse to contemplate His ways and feel a need to trouble themselves every day for food, day and night—perhaps they will not obtain a morsel of bread. What causes this for them? The fact that they are not scions of faith.[499]

“Here too, שטו (*shatu*), *they would roam around*—in their own שטותא (*shatuta*), foolishness, feeling a need to toil over it: *they would grind it between millstones or pound it in a mortar*….After all this trouble, they were not successful; rather, as is written: *It tasted like oily cream* (Numbers 11:8)—nothing more. Who caused this for them? They themselves, not being scions of faith.”[500]

Rabbi Yose said, “What is לשד השמן (*leshad ha-shamen*), *cream of oil* (Numbers 11:8)? Some say, ‘Kneaded in oil,’ according to its translation. And some say, ‘Just as שֵׁד (*shed*), a demon, turns into many colors, so the manna turned into many aspects.’”

Rabbi Yehudah said, “*Leshad ha-shamen*—sucking oil.”[501]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “*Each according to his eating had they gathered* (Exodus 16:18). Now, did one who ate a little gather a little, and one who ate more gather more? Yet it is written: *He who took more had no extra and he who took less had no lack* (ibid.). Rather, they gathered according to those who were eating. *His eating* implies ‘whoever would be eating it,’ and therefore it is not written אכילתו (*akhilato*), *what he would eat*.[502]

“What does this indicate? If a person held a servant or a maidservant, thinking it was his, and his neighbor came and said, ‘This servant is mine,’ then they would approach Moses for judgment. He would say to them, ‘How many people are in this one’s house, and how many people are in yours?’ They would reply, ‘So-and-so.’ At that moment, Moses would say to them, ‘Gather tomorrow, and then each of you come to me.’ The next day, they would go out and gather and come before Moses, placing the manna in front of him, and he would measure it. If that servant belonged to this one, then he would find one *omer* for the servant in that manna—one *omer* for every single person in his household. Then he would measure the other one and find the servant’s portion lacking from that manna—one *omer* for every single person in his household. He would say, ‘The

servant belongs to this one.’ As is written: *Each according to his eating had they gathered*. And similarly: *an* omer *to a head, the number of persons among you* (Exodus 16:16).”[503]

Rabbi Aḥa said, “*At evening you will know that it was* YHVH *who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you will see the glory of* YHVH (Exodus 16:6–7). *At evening you will know*—how will they know? Well, so it has been taught: Every single day, the norms of the blessed Holy One become manifest. In the morning Love arouses in the world; at the time called *evening* Judgment looms over the world, as they have established, for this is why Isaac instituted the afternoon prayer. What is indicated by *at evening you will know*? When Judgment arouses in the world, you will know that by that Judgment YHVH brought you out of Egypt. *And in the morning you will see the glory of* YHVH—for at that time Love arouses in the world, and He will provide you with nourishment.”[504]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said the opposite: “What is written above? *When we sat by the fleshpots*… (Exodus 16:3). At that very moment, *evening* aroused; at the time when Judgment arouses, Love also arouses in the world, as is written: *you will know that it was* YHVH *who brought you out of the land of Egypt*—you will know that Love that He manifested for you by taking you out of Egypt. *And in the morning you will see the glory of* YHVH*—the glory of* YHVH is well known. Why all this? *As He hears your grumblings against* YHVH… (ibid., 7).”[505]

Rabbi Yose said, “The blessed Holy One does not change His norms; rather, the wicked of the world change them, turning Compassion into Judgment, as has been said.”[506]

Rabbi El’azar taught, “From this manna the righteous are destined to eat in the world that is coming. Now, if you say, Of the same kind’—no, rather superior, unlike anything that ever existed. What is it? As we have established, for it

is written: *to gaze upon the beauty of YHVH and to contemplate in His temple* (Psalms 27:4). And similarly: *No eye has seen, O God, but You*, [*what You will do for one who awaits You*] (Isaiah 64:3)."[507]

See that YHVH has given you Sabbath… (Exodus 16:29).[508]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah opened, *"A song of ascents. Out of the depths I call You, O YHVH* (Psalms 130:1). *A song of ascents*—anonymous, not specifying who said it. However, *A song of ascents*, to be [63b] chanted by all inhabitants of the world, for this song is intended for generation after generation.[509]

"What is the meaning of *Out of the depths I call You, O YHVH*? So it has been taught: Whoever offers his prayer before the blessed Holy One should convey his request and pray from the depth of his heart, so that his heart may be completely with the blessed Holy One and he may concentrate heart and aspiration.[510]

"Now, did David really say this? Look at what is written: *With my whole heart I seek You* (Psalms 119:10)! This verse suffices; what need is there for *out of the depths*?[511]

"Well, so it has been taught: Every person who presents his request before the King should focus mind and will on the root of all roots, to draw blessings from the depth of the well, so that it will gush blessings from the spring of all. And what is that? The place from which the river issues and derives, as is written: *A river issues from Eden…* (Genesis 2:10), and similarly: *A river whose streams gladden the city of God* (Psalms 46:5). This is called *out of the depths*—depth of all, depth of the well, springs issuing and flowing, blessing all. This is the beginning of drawing blessings from above to below."[512]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah said, "When the Ancient One, concealed of all concealed, desires to provide for the worlds, He pours all and includes all in this supernal depth, and from here

the well draws and flows, gushing and feeding streams and springs. Whoever offers his prayer should concentrate heart and will to draw blessings from that depth of all, so that his prayer may be accepted and his desire fulfilled."[513]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Every single day the world is blessed by that supernal day, for all six days are blessed by the seventh day. And every single day conveys the blessing it has received through the day inhering in it. Therefore Moses said, *Let no one leave any of it over until morning* (Exodus 16:19). Why? Because one day does not give or add to its fellow. Rather, every single one reigns alone in its own time, no day ruling on its fellow's day.[514]

"Therefore, all those six days rule on their days, imbued with what they have received, and the sixth day includes more. This accords with what Rabbi El'azar has said: Why is it written יום הששי (*yom ha-shishi*), *the sixth day* (Genesis 1:31), which is not written of all the other days? Well, we have already established this, but הששי (*ha-shishi*), *the sixth*, because *Matronita* couples with it, arranging a table for the King. Therefore two portions appear on it: one for its own day, and one prepared for the King in the joy of *Matronita*.[515]

"That night, coupling of *Matronita* with the King, and all six days are blessed, each one on its own. Therefore, a person should arrange a table on Sabbath eve, so that blessings from above will alight upon it, and no blessing is found on an empty table.[516] That night, joy of *Matronita* with the King and their coupling; therefore, disciples of the wise who know this mystery—their coupling occurs Sabbath by Sabbath.[517]

"*See that YHVH has given you Sabbath* (Exodus 16:29). What is *Sabbath*? The day on which other days rest—totality of all, of all those other six."[518]

Rabbi Yeisa said, "Assembly of Israel is also called Sabbath, for She is its mate, and this is the bride. And it is written: *Observe Sabbath, for it is holy to you*… (Exodus 31:14); *He has given you* (ibid. 16:29)—*you* and not other

nations, as is written: *Between Me and the Children of Israel it is a sign forever* (ibid. 31:17). This is Israel's eternal heritage, of which is written *If you refrain from trampling Sabbath…* (Isaiah 58:13). In its place we have established this matter."[519] [64a][520]

YHVH said to Moses, "Pass before the people… and the staff with which you struck the Nile take in your hand, and go" (Exodus 17:5).[521]

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, *"The angel of YHVH encamps around those in awe of Him and delivers them* (Psalms 34:8). Happy are the righteous, for the blessed Holy One desires their honor more than His own! Come and see: How many people revile and blaspheme above—such as Sennacherib, who reviled and blasphemed, saying, *Who among all the gods of the countries* [*have delivered their countries out of my hand, that YHVH should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand*]? (2 Kings 18:35). Yet the blessed Holy One did not demand his punishment. But as soon as he stretched out his hand against Hezekiah, what is written? *An angel of YHVH went out and struck in the Assyrian camp…* (ibid. 19:35).[522]

"Jeroboam son of Nebat worshiped idols, offering incense to them and praising them, yet the blessed Holy One did not demand his punishment. When Iddo the prophet came and prophesied against him, Jeroboam stretched out his hand against him. What is written? *His hand withered* (1 Kings 13:4)—though for worshiping idols, He did not demand requital.[523]

"Pharaoh reviled and blasphemed, saying, *Who is YHVH that I should heed His voice?* (Exodus 5:2). Yet the blessed Holy One did not demand his punishment—until he refused Israel, as is written: *You still act insolently against My people*, [*not letting them go*] (ibid. 9:17). *Look, the hand of YHVH is about to be* [*against your livestock in the field*]…

(Exodus 9:3). Similarly everywhere, the blessed Holy One avenges the humiliation of the righteous more than His own.[524]

"Here, Moses said, *A little more and they will stone me* (Exodus 17:4). The blessed Holy One said to him, 'Moses, this is not the time to avenge your humiliation, and not in this manner. Rather, *pass before the people*, and I will see who stretches out his hand against you. Now, are you in their power or in Mine?'

"*And your staff with which you struck the Nile take in your hand*. Why? Because it was engraved with miracles, and the supernal Holy Name was inscribed on it.[525]

"At first, a snake, as is said: *how a snake makes its way over a rock* (Proverbs 30:19). *A snake*—well known. *A rock*—where is it revealed? Here it is revealed, as is written: *Look, I am about to stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock* (Exodus 17:6). Who is *rock*? as is said: *The Rock, His action is perfect* (Deuteronomy 32:4). There, Moses knew how *a snake* is poised on *a rock*. We have already established these matters."[526]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "If Scripture had fallen silent, fine; but so it is written: *and you shall strike the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water, and you will give drink to the assembly*."

He replied, "Certainly so! For you cannot find a single name of those holy names of the blessed Holy One that does not enact miracles and mighty deeds, generating whatever is needed by the world, especially here producing water."[527]

He said to him, "If so, look at what is written: *Behold, He struck the rock and waters gushed* (Psalms 78:20)! Who strikes his name?"[528]

He replied, "A potent hammer is known by its smoke—and you ask this?[529] Well, come and see: Everywhere *rock* is *Gevurah*, and when the blessed Holy One wishes to strike or

smite, this *Gevurah* arouses, striking and smiting. This is what is written: *Behold,* הכה צור (*hikkah tsur*), *the rock struck, and waters gushed*. If this *rock* had not aroused, smiting where necessary, the water would not have flowed."[530]

He said to him, "If so, look at what is written: *The Rock that bore you,* תשי (*teshi*), *you neglected* (Deuteronomy 32:18); and we have learned: What is *teshi*? This means 'you weakened Him'!"[531]

He replied, "Certainly so! For if the wicked knew that this *rock* was poised to arouse against them and punish them, they would refrain from sinning before Him—but it is weak in their eyes, since they do not contemplate it or contemplate their ways. So, *The Rock that bore you, you weakened*."[532]

Rabbi Abba said, "There is a rock, and then there is a rock! From a facet of Supernal Rock emerges another rock. And what is Supernal Rock? Rock of all rocks. Who is that? The one who bore Israel, as is written: *The Rock that bore you, you neglected*. For from a facet of Supernal Rock above emerges another rock; from a side of Supernal Mother emerges *Gevurah*. This accords with what Rabbi El'azar said: What is the meaning of *Who can utter* גבורות (*gevurot*), *the mighty acts of, YHVH* (Psalms 106:2)? Who are *gevurot, the mighty acts of, YHVH*? Including Supernal Mother of all—for although She is not Judgment, from Her side it comes into being, since from Her side [64b] appears *Gevurah*. Therefore, She is called Supernal Rock.[533]

"*You forgot the God who birthed you* (Deuteronomy 32:18)—radiance of Father. And what is that? Supernal *Ḥesed*, who is radiance of Father."[534]

Rabbi Abba said further, "Water is well known everywhere; yet the blessed Holy One, through this *rock*, aroused to pour out water—for it is unfitting except from *Gedullah*, and this was the sign and miracle of the blessed Holy One. Concerning this, David offered praise: *Who turned the rock into a pool of water* (Psalms 114:8)—*who*

turned implying that this is not normal for a rock. Thus, through Supernal Rock He brought forth water from a place below. And what is the name of the one below? Boulder, as is written: *You shall bring forth water for them from the boulder* (Numbers 20:8). How did this *boulder* bring forth water? By the power of the *rock* above."[535]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "*The Rock, His action is perfect* (Deuteronomy 32:4). What is meant by *His action is perfect*? That *the Rock* is transformed, performing the *action* of the *perfect* one. And who is that? Abraham, as is written: *Walk in My presence and be perfect* (Genesis 17:1). This is *Who turned the rock into a pool of water*—as implied by *His action is perfect*; this is Abraham.[536]

"At this time, the *rock* turned *perfect*. At another, second time—when Moses was punished, seeking to bring forth water through this *rock*—due to Israel's guilt it did not turn *perfect,* as before. At that moment, Moses raged, saying, *The Rock that bore you,* תשי (*teshi*), *you weakened*—that is, 'you weakened it from what is was before. For because of you, it is now no longer *perfect* and instead generates Judgment—unlike the situation in the days of ילדך (*yeladekha*)—namely, your youth.'"[537]

Rabbi Abba said, "What is the meaning of the verse *Is YHVH among us or* אין (*ayin*), *not*? (Exodus 17:7). Now, were the Israelites stupid, not knowing this? They saw *Shekhinah* in front of them, and clouds of glory above, surrounding them—and yet they said, *Is YHVH among us or not*? People who saw the radiant glory of their King at the sea—and we have learned: A maidservant at the sea saw what the eyes of the prophet Ezekiel never saw—would they be so stupid as to say, *Is YHVH among us or not*?[538]

"Rather, Rabbi Shim'on said as follows: They wanted to discern between the Ancient One—concealed of all concealed, called אין (*Ayin*), Nothingness—and the Short-Tempered One. Therefore it is not written *Is YHVH among us or* לא (*lo*), *not*?—corresponding to what is written: *whether*

they will follow My teaching or lo, not (Exodus 16:4)—but rather, *Is YHVH among us or Ayin, Nothingness*?[539]

"If so, why were they punished? Well, because they caused a separation and acted by testing, as is written: *and for their testing YHVH* (Exodus 17:7). They said, 'If it is this, we will ask in one way; if it is that, we will ask in another way.' Immediately, *Amalek came*… (ibid., 8)."[540]

Amalek came (Exodus 17:8). Rabbi Yose opened, "*Happy are you who sow* על (*al*), *by, all waters, who let loose the feet of the ox and the donkey* (Isaiah 32:20). *Happy are you who sow al, over, all waters*—there we learned: Many waters, many waters exist! Happy are Israel, whose sowing transpires only over the waters, as is written: *they encamped there* על (*al*), *over, the waters* (Exodus 15:27)—these are branches of the tree of the blessed Holy One. For it has been taught: The blessed Holy One has a tree—a grand and mighty tree, containing food for all. It is bordered by twelve balanced boundaries, which are fortified by four winds of the world. Seventy branches are joined to it, and Israel is in the trunk of that tree, surrounded by those seventy branches. This corresponds to what is written: *They came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy date palms, and they encamped there over the waters* (ibid.). This has already been discussed and established in many places.

"What is the meaning of *they encamped there over the waters*? Well, at that time Israel ruled those *waters*—namely the branches of the tree called *the raging waters* (Psalms 124:5). So, *Happy are you who sow over all waters*.[541]

"*Who let loose the feet of the ox and the donkey* (Isaiah 32:20)—two crowns of the left, to whom other nations are linked, called *ox* and *donkey*. This corresponds to what is written: *I have acquired ox and donkey* (Genesis 32:6)—

because Laban was skilled in sorcery and in those lower crowns, by which he sought to destroy Jacob, as is written: *An Aramean was destroying my father!* (Deuteronomy 26:5), as has been said. When Israel are worthy, they drive them away and they cannot dominate them, as is written: משלחי (*meshalleḥei*), *who drive away, the feet of the ox and the donkey*—so that they do not dominate them."[542]

Rabbi Abba said, "When they couple as one, inhabitants of the world cannot endure them, and therefore [65a] it is written: *Do not plow with an ox and a donkey together* (Deuteronomy 22:10)—*together,* precisely! And we have learned: A person should not provide space for evil species, for by action is aroused what should not be, and when they couple as one they cannot be endured.[543]

"From between their sides issues from their potency one called 'dog'—more impudent than all of them, as is written: *But against any of the Children of Israel, no dog will snarl* (Exodus 11:7). The blessed Holy One said, 'You said, *Is YHVH among us or not?* (Exodus 17:7). Behold, I am handing you over to the dog.' Immediately, *Amalek came*."[544]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "*First of nations, Amalek* (Numbers 24:20). Now, is Amalek *first of nations*? Weren't there many nations, tongues, and peoples in the world before Amalek came? However, when Israel went out of Egypt, fear and fright fell upon all nations of the world on account of Israel, as is written: *Nations heard, they quaked*… (Exodus 15:14). There was no nation that did not fear the mighty deeds of the blessed Holy One—except for Amalek, as is written: *with you exhausted and weary, and he did not fear God* (Deuteronomy 25:18). *And he did not fear God*—to approach you. So, *First of nations, Amalek*—for they came to wage war against Israel first; it was Amalek. Consequently, *and his end unto destruction* (Numbers 24:20), as is written: *Wiping out, I will wipe out the memory of Amalek* (Exodus 17:14), and similarly: *You shall wipe out*

the memory of Amalek (Deuteronomy 25:19)—as is written: *and his end unto destruction*. Why *unto* אובד (*oved*), *destruction*? The verse should read *unto* אבדו (*ovdo*), *his destruction*. However, until the blessed Holy One comes and destroys him, that is, *until* the blessed Holy One אובד (*oved*), *destroys*, him—as is written: *Wiping out, I will wipe out*."[545]

Rabbi El'azar said, "Come and see: Even though *the Rock, His action is perfect* (Deuteronomy 32:4) and He acted toward them in Love—bringing forth water for them—He did not abandon His own, for look at what is written next: *Amalek came!*"[546]

Amalek came. Rabbi Abba opened, "*There is a sickening evil I have seen under the sun*: [*wealth hoarded by its owner to his misfortune*] (Ecclesiastes 5:12).[547] How close-minded people are, because they do not engage in Torah! *There is a sickening evil*. Now, is there an evil that is sickening and an evil that is not? Well, surely *there is a sickening evil,* for we have learned: From the side of the left issue countless wardens of judgment, penetrating the atmosphere. When they want to emerge, they go and steep in the chasm of the great abyss, and then come forth—joining together as one, piercing the atmosphere, roaming the world, approaching human beings. Each one is called *evil,* as is said: *Evil* לא תאונה (*lo te'unneh*), *will not befall, you* (Psalms 91:10). What does *lo te'unneh* mean? That it comes with a ploy against people.[548]

"*Sickening*—why is it *sickening*? When this settles upon people, it makes them misers with their money. When collectors of charity come to him, it slaps his hand, saying, 'Don't spend any of yours!' When the poor come, it slaps his hand. When he is about to consume some of his money, it slaps his hand—in order to preserve it for another. From the day that it settles upon a person, it is *sickening*—for he lies ill, neither eating nor drinking. So, it is *a sickening evil*.[549]

“King Solomon exclaimed in wisdom, saying, *A man to whom God grants wealth, property, and honor…; but God does not give him the power to enjoy it…. This too is a sickening evil* (Ecclesiastes 6:2). What does this mean: *God does not give him the power* [*to enjoy it*]? If so, it is not in his possession![550]

“Well, if it were written *God does not allow him to enjoy it*, then I would say so. However, *does not give him the power*—because he trusts that *evil* and adheres to it. The blessed Holy One does not empower him over it, to smash it beneath him, because he desires it and clutches it. All his conduct is like someone lying ill—not going near his money nor spending any of it, saving it until he leaves the world and another comes along, who is its owner.[551]

“King Solomon exclaimed, saying, *Wealth* שמור (*shamur*), *preserved, for its owner* לרעתו (*le-ra’ato*), *because of his evil* (Ecclesiastes 5:12). Who is *its owner*? The other one, who inherits it. And how was he entitled to become owner of that wealth? Because this one trusted that *evil* and desired it, as is written: לרעתו (*le-ra’ato*), *for his evil*—namely, ‘because of that evil’ to which he clung, the other one gained it.[552]

“Alternatively, *There is a sickening evil*: one who dwells in fine accommodations in his father’s house, yet confronts his father [65b] with false accusations, cleaves to that *sickening evil*—like a person lying ill, whose conduct is totally capricious: ‘This I want; that I don’t want.’[553] Similarly, with Israel: the blessed Holy One carried them on eagles’ wings, encircling them with clouds of glory, *Shekhinah* journeying before them; He brought down for them manna to eat, brought forth for them sweet water; yet they responded to Him with false accusations. Immediately, *Amalek came*.”[554]

Amalek came. Rabbi Shim’on said, “Mystery of wisdom: He came from a decree of severe Judgment, and a single war took place above and below. You cannot find a word in Torah that does not contain supernal secrets of wisdom

linked to the Holy Name. The blessed Holy One said, as it were, 'When Israel are virtuous below, My power gains strength over all; and when they are not virtuous, they weaken—as it were—the power above, and the power of severe Judgment is strengthened.'[555]

"Come and see: When Israel sinned below, what is written? *Amalek came and fought with Israel*—coming to provoke Judgment against Compassion, all appearing above and below. ברפידים (*Birphidim*), *At Rephidim*—ברפוי ידים (*be-rippui yadayim*), with slackening of hands, for they slackened their hands from Torah, which is the blessed Holy One, as we have established."[556]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Twice Amalek waged war against Israel: once here, and once as is written: *The Amalekite and the Canaanite who dwelled on that mountain came down and struck them and crushed them as far as Hormah* (Numbers 14:45)."[557]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Above and below, assailing the blessed Holy One. Above, as has been said. Below, against the blessed Holy One, for they seized men and cut them on the sign of holy engraving, and took these and threw them upward, saying, 'Take what You wanted!' So in any case, all pertained to the blessed Holy One."[558]

Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men for us and go out, battle against Amalek…" (Exodus 17:9).

Now, what did Moses see to make him withdraw from this first battle of the blessed Holy One?[559] Why did he remove himself? Well, happy is the share of Moses, for he gazed and knew the essence of the matter! Moses said, "I will prepare myself for the battle above, and you, Joshua, prepare yourself for the battle below." This corresponds to what is written: *When Moses would raise his hand, Israel prevailed* (Exodus 17:11)—Israel above. Therefore, Moses removed

himself from the battle below, in order to gird himself for the battle above, which would be won through him.[560]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Now, is this battle of Amalek insignificant in your eyes? Come and see: From the day that the world was created until that time, and from that time until King Messiah comes—even Gog and Magog—nothing like it exists. Not because of numerous fierce warriors, but rather because on all flanks it affected the blessed Holy One.[561]

"*Moses said to Joshua* (Exodus 17:9). Why *to Joshua* and not someone else? At that time, he was young, as is written: *Joshua son of Nun, a youth* (Exodus 33:11), and there were many in Israel mightier than he. However, Moses gazed in wisdom and knew. What did he see? He saw Samael descending from the aspect above to assist Amalek below. Moses said, 'Surely, the battle is fittingly so!'"[562]

Joshua at that time occupied a very high rung. Now, if you say that he was situated in *Shekhinah* at that time—not so, for She was married and joined to Moses; consequently, Joshua was joined beneath him. How? Rabbi Shim'on said, "By that place called Youth."[563]

This corresponds to what Rabbi Yehudah said: "What is the meaning of the verse *Your eyes will see Jerusalem a tranquil abode, a tent not to be packed up* (Isaiah 33:20)? Jerusalem above, called *a tent not to be packed up*—no longer going into exile." This is the mystery written: *Joshua son of Nun, a youth—a youth*, surely! *Would not depart from within the Tent* (Exodus 33:11)—the one called *a tent not to be packed up*. This teaches that every single day he would suckle from *Shekhinah*, like that Youth above, suckling from Her continually.[564] [66a]

So, when Moses saw Samael descending to assist Amalek, he said, "Surely, this *youth* will confront him, overpowering and defeating him." Immediately, *Moses said to Joshua*, "*Choose men for us and go out, battle against Amalek*" (Exodus 17:9)—"this battle below is yours, and I

will gird myself for the battle above." *Choose men for us* —"righteous sons of righteous ones, worthy of accompanying you."[565]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "When Joshua the youth set out, Youth above aroused and was arrayed plentifully, with numerous weapons prepared for him by his Mother for this battle, in order to avenge with vengeance of the Covenant, corresponding to *a sword avenging with vengeance of the covenant* (Leviticus 26:25). This is the mystery written: *Joshua disabled Amalek and his people by the edge of the sword* (Exodus 17:13)—*by the edge of the sword,* precisely! Not by the edge of spears and weapons, but by the one called *avenging sword*. And Moses arrayed himself for the battle above."[566]

Moses' hands were כבדים (*kevedim*), *heavy* (Exodus 17:12)—really *kevedim, glorious*, venerable, holy, never defiled! Venerable—worthy of waging war above.[567]

They took a stone and placed it beneath him (ibid.)—for Israel was in distress and he would share their distress.[568]

Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one from this side and one from that side, and his hands were אמונה (*emunah*), *steadfast* (ibid.)—*emunah, faith,* surely! Now, was it simply because Aaron and Hur supported his hands that these were *faith*? Rather, Moses acted totally in wisdom: Aaron and Hur, each from his own side, and his hands in the middle; therefore, *his hands were faith*. Aaron, to arouse his side; and Hur, to arouse his side; they grasped his hands from here and from there, so that assistance would appear above.[569]

When Moses would raise his hand (Exodus 17:11). *When he would raise*—raising right above left, intending so while spreading his hands. *Israel prevailed*—Israel above.[570]

When he would let down his hand, Amalek prevailed (ibid.)—when Israel below waned from prayer, Moses'

hands could not stand erect and *Amalek prevailed*. From here we learn: Although the priest needs the sacrifice in order to array himself totally, Israel must accompany him with their prayers.[571]

It has been taught: In this battle of Amalek, above and below appeared. Therefore, *his hands were* אמונה (*emunah*), *faith,* fittingly. ויהי ידיו (*Vayhi yadav*), *His hands was*—the verse should read ויהיו (*va-yihyu*), [*His hands*] *were*. However, since all depends on the right, it is written *vayhi*, [*His hands*] *was*; and it is written ידו (*yado*), *His hand*, since this is the essence of all—as is written: *Your right hand, O YHVH, glorious in power* (Exodus 15:6).[572]

YHVH said to Moses, "Write this as a remembrance in a scroll, and set it in Joshua's ears: Wiping out, I will wipe out the memory of Amalek" (Exodus 17:14). Come and see: What is written above? *Joshua disabled Amalek and his people by the edge of the sword* (Exodus 17:13). ויחלוש (*Va-yaḥalosh*), *He disabled*—the verse should read ויהרוג (*va-yaharog*), *he slew*. However, *va-yaḥalosh, he cast lots*, as is said: חולש (*ḥolesh*), *casting lots, over nations* (Isaiah 14:12). Joshua would cast lots over them, and that *sword avenging with vengeance of the covenant* slew them, as is written: *by the edge of the sword*.[573]

Write this as a remembrance in a scroll—this, precisely![574]

And set it in Joshua's ears—for he is destined to slay other kings.[575]

Wiping out, I will wipe out—wiping out, above; *I will wipe out*, below.[576]

The memory—memory above and below.

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "It is written: *Wiping out, I will wipe out,* and it is written: *You shall wipe out the memory of Amalek* (Deuteronomy 25:19). However, the blessed Holy One said, 'You, wipe out his memory below, and I will wipe out his memory above.'"[577]

Rabbi Yose said, “Amalek brought other nations along with him, but they were all afraid to approach Israel except for him. So Joshua cast lots over them.”[578]

Rabbi Yeisa said, “ויחלוש (*Va-yaḥalosh*), *He disabled*—smashing their power above.”[579]

Moses built an altar and called יהוה נסי (*YHVH Nissi*), *YHVH My Banner* (Exodus 17:15).

Moses built an altar—corresponding to the one above. *And called its name YHVH My Banner*—called the name of this altar *YHVH My Banner* because it wreaked vengeance for that holy insignia [66b] of Israel, since from that time it was called *avenging with vengeance of the covenant* (Leviticus 26:25).[580]

Rabbi Yose said, “*Moses built an altar*—an altar to atone for them.[581] *And called its name*—whose?”

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “The name of that altar. *YHVH* נסי (*Nissi*), *My Banner*—as is said: *There* נסהו (*nissahu*), *He tested him* (Exodus 15:25), and all is one matter, for Israel was uncovered and that sign of holy engraving revealed. From here we learn: Once a person’s son is circumcised and the sign of covenant is revealed in him, it is called an altar to atone for him. And what is its name? *YHVH Nissi, My Banner*. Similarly, *Jacob built an altar and called it God, God of Israel* (Genesis 33:20). Whom? That place called *altar*. And what is its name? *God, God of Israel*.”[582]

Rabbi Yose said, “What is the meaning of the verse: *They saw the God of Israel…* (Exodus 24:10)? Now, who can see the blessed Holy One? Look at what is written: *For no human can see Me and live* (ibid. 33:20)! Yet here it is said *They saw the God of Israel*. However, so we have learned: Whoever gazes at a rainbow gazes, as it were, upon *Shekhinah*, and to gaze upon *Shekhinah* is forbidden. Therefore it is forbidden for a person to gaze at the fingers of the priests when they spread their hands.[583]

“It is forbidden to gaze at a rainbow. Who is a rainbow?”

Rabbi Abba said, “At a rainbow, unspecified.”

“What is ‘at a rainbow, unspecified’?”

He replied, “At a rainbow above and at a rainbow below. A rainbow above—at its colors. For whoever gazes at its colors gazes, as it were, upon a place above, upon which it is forbidden to gaze, so as not to shame *Shekhinah*. A rainbow below, what is it? That sign of covenant engraved in a person; for whoever gazes at it brings shame above.”[584]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “If so, look at what is written: *Place your hand under my thigh* (Genesis 24:2), for he made him swear by this sign!”[585]

He replied, “Leave the fathers of the world alone, for they are not like other inhabitants of the world! Furthermore, it is written *Place your hand under my thigh*, and not *Look under my thigh*. Thus, it is forbidden to gaze at a rainbow, unspecified.

“It has been taught: *They saw the God of Israel* (Exodus 24:10)—the rainbow was revealed to them in radiant sapphirine colors, radiant keys flashing in every direction, as implied by what is written: את אלהי (*et Elohei*), *the God of, Israel*, and it is not written *They saw* אלהי (*Elohei*), *the God of, Israel*.”[586]

Rabbi Yose said, “Light of the lamp of *Shekhinah*. What is that? The one who serves *Shekhinah*, called Youth in the Temple. Therefore, *et Elohei, the God of*, precisely![587]

“*And beneath His feet was like a fashioning of* לבנת הספיר (*livnat ha-sappir*), *sapphire pavement* (Exodus 24:10)—for beneath His place was inlaid one לבינתא (*leveinta*), brick, of those that were made in Egypt. For we have learned: A certain woman gave birth in Egypt, and Pharaoh’s officers came, and she inserted him into a brick. Then the palm of a hand appeared and grasped it, and it was inlaid beneath the feet of *Shekhinah*, remaining before Him until the Temple

below was burned, as is written: *He did not remember His footstool on the day of His wrath* (Lamentations 2:1)."[588]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "*Sapphire pavement*—radiance of sapphire in supernal engraved keys, flashing in seventy-two directions, as is written: *I will lay your foundations with sapphires* (Isaiah 54:11).[589]

"*Like the essence of heaven* (Exodus 24:10). What is *the essence of heaven*?"

Rabbi Abba replied, "Just as *the essence of heaven* is engraved with seventy-two branches—blossoming, flashing in every direction—here too, the appearance of that *essence of heaven* is like the appearance of heaven itself."[590]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "All is inscribed in the radiance that they saw, engraved from the aspect of *Shekhinah*."[591]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah said, "If so, look: there are sixty surrounding *Shekhinah*, as is written: *sixty warriors surrounding her* (Song of Songs 3:7)!"[592]

He replied, "Certainly so! However, sixty plus the radiance of twelve boundaries never depart from around Her. For we have learned: Twelve supernal engraved boundaries balanced in the great, mighty holy tree; and all of them illumine *Matronita* when She joins the King. This is *essence of heaven—essence of heaven,* really! All those shining paths glow in Him with the radiance of *Matronita*.[593]

"It has been taught: Radiance of those sixty surrounding Her is etched on that Youth, and we call these 'sixty lashes of fire,' in which he is clothed in the aspect of *Shekhinah*, blazing in Judgment, as is written: [67a] *sixty warriors surrounding her*.[594]

"It has been taught: *Moses built an altar,* as we have established. *And called its name* יהוה נסי (*YHVH Nissi*), *YHVH My Banner* (Exodus 17:15)—*YHVH My Banner*, really! Why? Because Amalek seized all those who were circumcised but not uncovered, and cut them and threw these upward, saying, 'Take what You wanted.'[595] At that moment, what is

written? *He said, 'For hand upon Yah's throne: War for YHVH against Amalek from generation to generation'* (ibid., 16)—מדר דר (*mi-dor dor*), *from generation to generation*, spelled deficiently."

Rabbi Yehudah said, "You cannot find a single generation of all generations arriving in the world that does not contain some of that evil seed, and the blessed Holy One wages war against them."[596]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "From דיורא (*diyyura*), habitation, below to habitation above, and of them is written *Let sinners vanish from the earth* [*and the wicked be no more*] (Psalms 104:35)—in this world and in the world that is coming. Of that time is written *Bless YHVH, O my soul. Hallelujah!* (ibid.)."[597]

פרשת יתרו

Parashat Yitro

"JETHRO" (EXODUS 18:1–20:23)

Rabbi El'azar opened,][1] "*Aaron raised* וידיו (*yadav*), *his hands* (Leviticus 9:22)—spelled וידו (*yado*), *his hand,* one, for a person should raise right above left. We have already established the mystery.[2]

"I found in the Book of King Solomon[3] that whoever raises his hands above, not in prayer or request, is a person who is cursed by ten appointed powers, namely *ten rulers who are in a city* (Ecclesiastes 7:19). These are ten appointed over spreading of hands above, to receive that prayer or blessing and to endow it with power so that the Holy Name may be glorified and blessed from below. Once it is glorified from below by that spreading of hands above, then it is blessed from above and glorified on all sides.[4] These ten are appointed to receive some of those blessings above and pour them below, blessing the one who blesses Him, as is written: *I Myself will bless them* (Numbers 6:27).[5]

"Consequently, a person should be careful when he raises his hands above, to be immersed in prayer or blessings or requests; he should not raise his hands in vain. For these ten are poised and aroused toward that spreading of hands, and if it is in vain, they curse him with 248 curses. Of this one is written *He loved cursing, and it has come upon him…* (Psalms 109:17).[6] Then an impure

spirit settles on those hands, for that is its way: to settle on an empty place; and blessing does not settle on an empty place. Therefore it is written: *I raise my hand to YHVH* (Genesis 14:22), and we translate: 'in prayer.'[7]

"This spreading of hands contains supernal mysteries. When they are spread and held erect, a person glorifies the blessed Holy One in several supernal mysterious ways. He is worthy of uniting the mystery of ten utterances, in order to unify all, so that the Holy Name may be blessed fittingly. And he is worthy of uniting the mystery of the inner Chariots and the outer Chariots, so that the Holy Name may be blessed on all sides, and all be united as one, above and below."[8]

He opened, saying, "ולא יראו פני ריקם (*Ve-lo yera'u fanai reiqam*), *They shall not appear in My presence empty-handed* (Exodus 23:15). This is the mystery of raising the fingers, when one raises them above, for they should not be raised בריקניא (*be-reiqanya*), in vain, but rather in prayer, requests, and blessings, or in one of these. ולא יראו פני ריקם (*Ve-lo yera'u fanai reiqam*), *My face shall not appear in vain*—it is not written ולא יראו לפני (*ve-lo yera'u le-fanai*), *They shall not appear in My presence,* but rather *ve-lo yera'u fanai, My face shall not appear*—mystery of raising the fingers, which must not be raised in vain, as has been said.[9]

"The ten powers that we mentioned are ten utterances below, in the mystery of engraved letters corresponding above. These preside at first over raising of the fingers, [67b] and thereby the whole side of holiness is united above, uplifted; then all other sides are subdued and acknowledge the Holy King.[10]

"Come and see: In mystery of the Holy Name there are King and Priest, serving in mystery of holiness, both above and below. There is King above, who is mystery of Holy of Holies; He is Supernal King. Beneath Him is Priest, mystery of primordial light, who serves before Him; this is the priest called Great, the right side.[11]

“There is King below, corresponding to King above, and He is king over all below. Beneath Him is Priest, mystery of Michael the High Priest, on the right. Surely on the side of holiness there are King and Priest, and this is mystery of perfect faith.[12]

“On the Other Side, which is not the side of holiness, there is mystery that is king—as we have established, he is called *an old and foolish king* (Ecclesiastes 4:13).[13] Beneath him is *priest of* און (*On*), *On;* this is the mystery that is written: *Ephraim said, ‘Ah, I have become rich; I have gained* און (*on*), *power, for myself!’* (Hosea 12:9). For this power ruled over the act committed by Jeroboam, and if he had not discovered this power, he would not have succeeded in that act.[14]

“Mystery of the matter: When this king and this priest are subdued and broken, and they acknowledge Him, then the blessed Holy One rules alone above and below, as is written: *YHVH alone will be exalted* (Isaiah 2:11).[15]

“Similarly, in this very mystery, the blessed Holy One acted on earth: He broke and punished *an old and foolish king*—namely, Pharaoh—and he came and acknowledged the blessed Holy One. Afterward that priest serving under him was broken and subdued, until he came and acknowledged the blessed Holy One. This is *priest of On,* Other Side, who is the left side. And this is the mystery uttered by Rachel when she saw that she was dying, as is written: בן אוני (*Ben oni*), *Ben-oni,* son of my vigor (Genesis 35:18); therefore Jacob quickly said, בן ימין (*Ben yamin*), *Benjamin,* son of the right, not בן און (*Ben on*), *son* of On; right side, not left side.[16]

“Once that king and that priest acknowledged the blessed Holy One and were broken before Him, the blessed Holy One ascended in glory above all, above and below. And until the blessed Holy One ascended in glory, acknowledged by them, the Torah was not given. After Jethro came and acknowledged, saying, *Now I know that YHVH is greater than*

all the gods. Blessed is YHVH, who has rescued you… (Exodus 18:10–11), then the blessed Holy One ascended in glory above and below, and afterward He gave the Torah in complete dominion over all."[17]

[Rabbi Shim'on] opened, saying, *"Peoples will praise You, O God; peoples will praise You all together* (Psalms 67:4).[18] King David rose, praising and thanking the blessed Holy One, as soon as the north wind aroused and struck those strings of the harp, so that the harp played, emitting song.[19]

"What song did it sing? Come and see: When the blessed Holy One arouses toward all those chariots to provide them with food, as we have established—for it is written: *She rises while it is still night and provides food for her household*… (Proverbs 31:15)—then they all rejoice, and open, saying, *God will be gracious to us and bless us; He will shine His face upon us. Selah* (Psalms 67:2). When the north wind arouses and descends upon the world, it breathes, uttering, *that Your way may be known on earth, among all nations Your salvation* (ibid., 3). The harp, as it is played by that wind, opens, saying, *Peoples will praise You, O God; peoples will praise You all together* (ibid., 4).[20]

"David, when he rose and Holy Spirit aroused upon him, opened, saying, *May earth yield her harvest; may God, our God, bless us. May God bless us, and all the ends of the earth revere Him* (ibid., 7)—so as to draw the goodness of the blessed Holy One from above to below. Afterward, David came in Holy Spirit and arranged them as one, when he contemplated all—this verse of the harp—because glory of the blessed Holy One consummates above and below when other nations come and praise Him. Once they acknowledge Him, glory of the blessed Holy One is perfected above and below.[21]

"When Moses came [68a] to Pharaoh and said to him *The God of the Hebrews happened upon us*… (Exodus 5:3), he opened, saying, *I do not know YHVH* (ibid., 2). The blessed

Holy One wanted His name to be glorified on earth as it is glorified above. Once He struck him and his nation, he came and acknowledged the blessed Holy One, as is written: *YHVH is in the right*… (Exodus 9:27). He, who was regnant king of the whole world—as soon as he acknowledged, all the other kings acknowledged, as is written: *Then the chiefs of Edom were terrified*… (ibid. 15:15). Jethro—supreme priest, ordained chief of all false gods—came and acknowledged the blessed Holy One. Then He was glorified."[22]

Rabbi Shim'on said to Rabbi El'azar, his son, "El'azar, of this is written *Peoples, O God, will praise You; peoples will praise You all together* (Psalms 67:4)."[23]

Rabbi El'azar came and kissed his hands. Rabbi Abba wept, and said, "*As a father has compassion for his children*… (Psalms 103:13). Who will have compassion for Rabbi El'azar, completing his words, without the compassion of the Master? Happy is our share that we were privileged to hear these words in his presence, so that we will not be ashamed by them in the world that is coming!"[24]

Rabbi Abba said, "Look: Of Jethro, it is not written *priest of On,* but rather *priest of Midian* (Exodus 3:1)!"[25]

He replied, "All is one. At first, Joseph's father-in-law is called *priest of On* (Genesis 41:45); later, Moses' father-in-law is *priest of Midian.* All is a single mystery, for these two —Moses and Joseph—occupy a rung of one mystery. As for what is said: כהן מדין (*kohen midyan*), *priest of Midian*—this is the mystery of אשת מדינים (*eshet midyanim*), *quarrelsome wife* (Proverbs 21:19). Moses and Joseph occupy a single rung; this is the mystery of ו (*vav*), two as one."[26]

Rabbi Abba raised his hands upon his head and wept. He said, "Rabbi! Radiance of Torah ascends now to the highest heaven of the supernal Throne. Afterward, who will illumine the radiance of Torah? Woe to the world that will be left orphaned! However, words of the Master will shine in the world until King Messiah arrives, for of then is

written *The earth will be filled with knowledge of* YHVH *as waters cover the sea* (Isaiah 11:9)."[27]

Jethro, priest of Midian, heard (Exodus 18:1).[28]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "This verse calls for contemplation. At first is written *all that* Elohim *had done for Moses* (ibid.), and afterward is written *that* YHVH *had brought out* (ibid.). Well, this is the secret: *all that* Elohim *had done*—this name that protected Moses and Israel, never departing from them in exile. Afterward, the supreme Name brought them out of Egypt, for the holy Name that brought them forth inhered in the mystery of Jubilee.[29]

"Alternatively, *all that* Elohim *had done for Moses*—when he was thrown into the river and when he was saved from Pharaoh's sword. *And for Israel His people* (ibid.)—as is written: YHVH *heard their moaning (ibid. 2:24), and similarly: The more they oppressed them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread* (ibid. 1:12)."[30]

Jethro heard… (Exodus 18:1). Rabbi Yose opened, "פדות (*Pedut*), *Redemption, He sent to His people*; צוה (*tsivvah*), *He ordained, His covenant forever*; קדוש (*qadosh*), *holy, and awesome is His name* (Psalms 111:9). Why is this different from all the other verses, in all of which two words appear in alphabetical order, whereas in this verse and the following verse there are three each? Well, in order to complete six aspects alphabetically. This one, corresponding to three redemptions of Israel, aside from the first redemption. The other verse, corresponding to Torah, Prophets, and Writings—and all depends upon this Wisdom.[31]

"*Redemption He sent to His people*—when the blessed Holy One redeemed Israel from Egyptian exile and performed miracles and mighty deeds for them. *He ordained His covenant* לעולם (*le-olam*), *for the world*—when

Jethro came and the blessed Holy One received him and drew him to His worship. From there, all converts have been drawn under the wings of *Shekhinah*. From there on, *holy and awesome is His name*—for then the Name of the blessed Holy One was hallowed, since from the Other Side the Holy Name is hallowed, when the Other Side is broken and overturned, as happened with Jethro.[32]

"*Jethro heard*. Now, did Jethro hear, while the whole world heard did not hear? Look at what is written: *Peoples heard, they quaked* (Exodus 15:14)! However, the whole world heard and was not broken, whereas this one heard and was broken [68b] and overwhelmed in the presence of the blessed Holy One and drawn to revering Him."

Rabbi Abba said, "In many places we have learned that everything the blessed Holy One has made above and below is entirely true, an act of truth. You cannot find anything in the world that a person should reject or treat with disdain, for each is an act of truth and all is essential to the world.[33]

"Now, once Rabbi El'azar was walking on the way, accompanied by Rabbi Ḥizkiyah. They saw a snake, and Rabbi Ḥizkiyah was about to kill it. Rabbi El'azar said to him, 'Leave it alone, don't kill it!'[34]

"He replied, 'But it's an evil thing that kills people.'

"He said to him, 'Ḥizkiyah, look at what is written: *Does the snake bite without a whisper?* (Ecclesiastes 10:11). A snake does not bite a person until it is whispered to from above and told, "Go and kill so-and-so!"'[35]

"And sometimes, just as it does this, so it saves a person from other things, and thereby the blessed Holy One generates a miracle for people. All is in the hands of the blessed Holy One, and all is the work of His hands, needed by the world. If the world did not need them, the blessed Holy One would not have created them. Therefore, one must not disdain anything in the world or the acts of the blessed Holy One."[36]

He opened, saying, *"Elohim saw all that He had made, and look, it was very good!* (Genesis 1:31). *Elohim saw*—חיים אלהים (*Elohim Ḥayyim*), Living God. *Saw*—gazing to illumine them and watch over them. *All that He had made—all* in one totality, above and below.[37]

"*And it was good*—the right side. *Very*—the left side. As they have established: *good*—Angel of Life; *very*—Angel of Death. All is one mystery.[38]

"A mystery here for those who contemplate the mystery of Wisdom: *Elohim saw all that He had made*. Throughout the account of Creation is written *Elohim saw that it was good,* and here: *Elohim saw all that He had made. Elohim* below, ruling those below; *Elohim* above, ruling those above.

"Alternatively, all is *Elohim Ḥayyim,* Living God, illumining and kindling all those lamps above and below; from there radiate all those lights, lustering."[39]

Tosefta.[40] Within concealment of the concealed was engraved an engraving, invisible, unrevealed. That engraving was engraved and not engraved. Masters of understanding, open-eyed, cannot fathom it—vitality of all. That engraving is tiny, invisible, unrevealed. Abiding in Will, to sustain all, to receive what it receives from that which has neither engraving nor will, invisible.[41]

That engraving desired to cover itself, and made itself a palace in which to be concealed—generating that palace from itself, expanding it extensively in all directions, adorning it with precious fabric, opening in it fifty gates.[42]

Within, within, that engraving was concealed, treasured away. Once it was hidden inside, entering within, it was filled with light. From that radiance stream lights, sparks shoot out of those gates, illuminating all.[43]

That palace is covered with six curtains; those six curtains are five. Within, within those curtains stands one embroidery. By that curtain, the palace is covered; from within, it gazes and sees all. This palace is open-eyed, never

asleep; gazing constantly, to illumine below from the radiance of that engraving. That Understanding, concealed Wisdom, is Will of Wills—concealed, treasured away, unrevealed, existing and not existing. Blessed be He from concealed of concealment. Blessed be He forever and ever. Amen.[44]

"Come and see: Jethro, who gave Moses advice on the administration of justice—this is how it should be. Here is the mystery: He acknowledged the blessed Holy One and arranged before Him the administration of His laws. What is written? *For judgment belongs to God* (Deuteronomy 1:17)—not to the Other Side. And laws, to Israel—not to other nations, as is written: *His statutes and judgments to Israel* (Psalms 147:19).[45]

"Come and see: A person should not act disdainfully toward another, and the word of a commoner is still a word. [69a] For of Moses is written *Moses heeded the voice of his father-in-law* (Exodus 18:24)."[46]

Jethro heard (Exodus 18:1).[47] He opened, saying, "*So I will praise You among the nations, O YHVH, and to Your name I will sing* (Psalms 18:50). King David uttered this in the Holy Spirit when he saw that the glory of the blessed Holy One is exalted above, becoming glorified in the world, only from the aspect of other nations. Now, you might say, 'Look, the blessed Holy One is glorified in the world only on account of Israel!' Certainly so, for Israel is the foundation of the lamp, shining. But when other nations come and acknowledge Him, subjugating themselves to the glory of the blessed Holy One, then the foundation of the lamp is augmented, empowered over all His works in a single bond, and the blessed Holy One reigns alone, above and below.[48]

"Similarly, fear and awe of the blessed Holy One fell upon the whole world. As soon as Jethro came—supreme priest of all other, false gods—glory of the blessed Holy One was empowered, prevailing over all. For when the whole

world heard of the might of the blessed Holy One, they trembled, and all of them looked toward Jethro, who was wise and the ordained chief of all false gods of the world. Once they saw him come and worship the blessed Holy One, saying *Now I know that YHVH is greater than all the gods* (Exodus 18:11), they all withdrew from their idols, realizing that these lacked any substance. Then the Holy Name was glorified on all sides. Consequently, this portion was inscribed in the Torah, with him at its beginning.[49]

"Jethro was one of Pharaoh's wise men. Pharaoh had three wise men: one was Jethro, one was Job, and one was Balaam. One was Jethro, for there was no worship—or prince, minister, or star ruling its domain—for which he did not know the appropriate ritual and service. Balaam was a sorcerer in all kinds of sorcery, whether by act or by word.[50]

"Job was imbued with awe; his essence lay in that awe. For concerning an entity above, whether of Holiness or of the Other Side, one cannot draw a spirit from above to below, approaching it, except by awe. One should concentrate his heart and will in awe and broken-heartedness, and then draw down a spirit from above and the will that is needed. If he does not direct his heart and will in awe to that side, he cannot attain his aspiration—except for those tenuous forms, and not all of them, since among them are rulers who require intention of the heart and awe. All the more so, those supernal entities, which require awe, fear, and intention.[51]

"Jethro needed to worship that side—whether at a time when people needed it or at a time when they did not—so that side would cling to him when he needed it. Balaam, by that sorcery, as has been said. Job, through the intensity of his awe, turned to revering the blessed Holy One in Egypt when he saw those mighty deeds and miracles that the blessed Holy One performed in Egypt. Despite all this, Jethro did not turn until Israel went out of Egypt—all those

bonds and figures tied by the Egyptians were nothing, and they went forth. After He drowned them in the sea, he converted to the worship of the blessed Holy One.[52]

"Balaam did not repent or turn, for the filth of the Other Side clung to him. Yet even so, he glimpsed from afar through that filth and clinging to the Other Side. For on the Other Side is a tenuous glow shining all around, as is written: *and a radiance surrounding it* (Ezekiel 1:4).[53] By this small glimpse he glimpsed from afar, and so with all those words he saw a tiny bit of that radiance, as from behind a wall. He spoke without knowing what he was speaking—like that radiance of shutting the eye, when the eyeball turns and a person sees concealed light, yet without seeing. This is the mystery of *utterance of the man* שתום העין (*shetum ha-ayin*), *whose eye is closed* (Numbers 24:3)—as has been established: שתום (*shetum*), סתום (*setum*), concealed, and all is one.[54] For the Other Side invariably contains [69b] a little tenuous glow from the Side of Holiness—like most dreams, where in a heap of straw lies a single grain of wheat—except for those tenuous, impudent forms, which are all extreme impurity. Balaam abode in all.[55]

"Happy is the share of Moses, who is above among all supernal sanctities, and who gazed upon that which no other human in the world is permitted to see. Just as Balaam saw a little tenuous glow, as from behind a wall, from within that Other Side, so too Moses, through immense supernal radiance, saw below as from behind a wall, one thin streak of darkness appearing to him—and not constantly, just as Balaam did not gaze at that glow constantly.[56]

"Happy is the share of Moses, Faithful Prophet! What is written of him? *The angel of YHVH appeared to him in a flame of fire from within a bush* (Exodus 3:2)—*a bush,* surely, was within that holiness, cleaving to it. For all things cleave to one another, pure and impure; there is no purity except through impurity. This is the mystery of *Who can produce*

pure from impure? (Job 14:4)—shell and kernel, arising with one another. This shell is not eliminated or broken until the time when the dead will rise from the dust. Then the shell will be broken and radiance will shine into the world unconcealedly from the kernel. Happy are the righteous in this world and in the world that is coming!"[57]

And her two sons (Exodus 18:2).[58] Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "Now, were they *her sons,* and not the sons of Moses? However, because she exerted herself for them without her husband, Torah calls them *her sons,* and not *his sons*."[59]

Rabbi Yose said, "Although they were Moses' sons, a word of truth: *her sons,* surely!"[60]

Rabbi El'azar said, "Look, Moses was coupling with another, supernal place, so it would have been disrespectful to call them *his sons*. Now, although they were his sons, out of respect for that place with which he coupled, they are called *her sons* here; later, they are called *his sons*. Why? Because at the moment they arrived, Moses was speaking with *Shekhinah*. After he parted and went out to meet his father-in-law, then is written *Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, and his sons and his wife came to Moses* (Exodus 18:5)."[61]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "El'azar! I see in this portion that you begin the word fittingly, but the conclusion, not so. Certainly, out of respect for *Shekhinah*—supernal coupling with whom Moses coupled—it is written *her sons*. And if you say, 'But it is written *Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, and his sons and his wife came to Moses*'—all is one entirety. *And his sons*—the sons of Jethro, for after Moses came to him, he had sons.[62]

"So it was with Jacob: once he came to Laban and dwelled with him, he had sons. Here too, once Moses dwelled with Jethro, Jethro had sons, and he brought his entire household with him to bring them under the wings of

Shekhinah. Jethro said to Moses, *I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you, and your wife and her two sons* (Exodus 18:6)—it is not written *and your two sons*. Jethro had sons, as is written: *The sons of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, went up from the City of Palms* (Judges 1:16), and he left his sons with Moses."[63]

Jethro came (Exodus 18:5). He opened, saying, "*Many peoples will go and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHVH, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths.' For from Zion will come forth Torah, and the word of YHVH from Jerusalem* (Isaiah 2:3). This verse has been established in many places; however, other nations are destined to wear out their feet, walking to enter under the wings of *Shekhinah. Come, let us go up*—all other, false gods of the world undergo descent, while whoever cleaves to the blessed Holy One attains ascent.

"*To the mountain of YHVH*—Abraham, as is written: *as is said to this day, 'On the mountain of YHVH He will be seen'* (Genesis 22:14). For Abraham called it *mountain:* just as a mountain is ownerless, open to anyone in the world who wants, so this holy place is ownerless, receiving anyone in the world who wants.[64]

"*To the house*—Jacob, who called this place *house,* as is written: *This is none other than the house of God!* (Genesis 28:17).[65]

"*Mountain* and *house*—although all is a single rung, [70a] one transcends the other. *Mountain*—for other nations, when they come to enter under Her wings. *House*—for Israel, to be with them as a wife with her husband, in one dwelling, in joy, crouching over them like a mother over her children.[66]

"Come and see: What is written here of Jethro? *Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, and his sons and his wife came to Moses, to the wilderness…* (Exodus 18:5). Since it is written *to Moses,* why is it written *to the wilderness*? Well, essence

of all! Why is it written *to the wilderness*? Because he came *to the wilderness*. And who is that? *The mountain of Elohim*—a place for converts to convert. Therefore it is written *to Moses, to the wilderness—to Moses,* to convert them and bring them into *the wilderness. To the wilderness* they came, namely *the mountain of Elohim*, to generate their souls.[67]

"So that place abides in mystery—whoever comes, attains it and is called גר צדק (*ger tsedeq*), convert of Righteousness, as we have established. *Ger,* Stranger—although he cleaves to this supernal holy place, since he has left his own people and ancestors he is called *ger*, like one who sets up his dwelling in a place he never knew before."[68]

Rabbi Yitsḥak and Rabbi Yose were sitting one day and studying Torah in Tiberias. Rabbi Shim'on passed by and asked them, "What are you engaged in?"

They replied, "In this verse that we learned from our Master."[69]

He asked, "Which is that?"

They replied, "That which is written: *This is the book of the generations of Adam: On the day of God's creating* אדם (*adam*), *a human, in the image of God He created him* (Genesis 5:1). As has been said, the blessed Holy One showed Adam all those generations destined to come into the world, and all those leaders and all those sages destined for every single generation.[70]

"And we learned a secret: זה ספר (*Zeh sefer*), *This is the book*. There is a book, and then there is a book! A book above, a book below. The book below is called Book of Remembrance—book of that remembrance, namely a certain Righteous One, called *zeh, this*. And in order not to separate them, since they are constantly as one, in single union, it is written *zeh sefer, this is the book*—two rungs in one, totality of male and female. This is one entirety, for all

those souls and spirits flying into inhabitants of the world—totality of all generations—are *the generations of* *adam,* surely! For from that Righteous One that we mentioned, those souls fly forth in one desire. This is watering of the garden, watered by that river issuing from Eden, as is written: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden* (Genesis 2:10). This is the mystery of *adam,* as is written: *the generations of* *adam*.[71]

"Afterward, *on the day of God's creating* *adam* (Genesis 5:1)—this is *Adam* below. For there are two *adams* recorded in this [70b] verse: one, mystery above; one, mystery below. *Adam* who is mystery above lies in concealment, concealed by the verse as male and female in single mystery, as is written: זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *this is the book*—totality of male and female as one. Once they generated offspring together, they were called *adam,* as is written: *generations of* *adam*. After the matter was revealed from the initial secrecy of the verse, He created *adam* below, as is written: *On the day of God's creating* *adam, a human, in the image of God He created him* (ibid.). *In the image*—namely, in this visionary mirror in which forms appear; those forms do not persist in that mirror enduringly, but rather pass away. Similarly, *in the image of God*.[72]

"Alternatively, *in the image of God*—form of limbs, male and female, in the mystery of *behind and before* (Psalms 139:5).[73] *Behind*—in the mystery of *observe*. *And before*—in the mystery of *remember*. On these depend all the commandments of Torah: 613 commandments of Torah, totality of all.[74] And we have learned: *Behind* the act of Creation, *and before* the act of the Chariot. All depends on one another. *In the image of God*—in that exact form, as our Master has established.[75]

"Further, *This is the book of the generations of* *Adam*—for features, in the mysteries of human features, to recognize those *generations* of a human being. The mysterious features of a human: in hair, in forehead, in

eyes, in face, in lips, in ears, in lines of the hands. By these seven, humans are recognized.[76]

"By hair. One whose hair is curly—rising above his head—is of an angry disposition, his heart constricted in frames. His actions are improper; in partnership, stay away from him.[77]

"One whose hair is very smooth, hanging down, is good for partnership and profit inheres in him; on his own, not so.[78] He is master of mysteries—those supernal mysteries—minor mysteries he does not [71a] fathom. His actions are proper and improper.

"If it hangs down yet is not smooth, his heart is fearless; he is a master of insolence. He yearns for proper actions, which seem fine to him, but he does not act. When he grows old, he returns to reverence and his actions are worthy.

These words apply to matters of the world, but in matters of heaven, whoever approaches him will succeed.[79] Supernal secrets will not be revealed to him, but minor secrets he can be trusted to guard. From something small, he produces much, and his words are heeded.[80] This mystery is ז (*zayin*), of those letters of measure of our Master.[81]

"Black hair, very glossy—he succeeds in all his worldly affairs, in business and the like. He is generous. This one succeeds on his own; whoever associates with him does not succeed for long, only immediately, and that success flies away from him. This mystery is י (*yod*), included in ז (*zayin*).[82]

"Black hair that is not glossy—sometimes he succeeds, sometimes not. This one is for partnership—to engage with him for the short term, not for the long term, for he will conceive ideas.[83] In order not to be separated from him, it is good for a short time.[84] This one will succeed in Torah if he strives for her, and through him others will succeed. He cannot keep a secret for long. His heart is distressed, yet he will see the downfall of his enemies; his enemies will not prevail against him, yet he is fainthearted. He is in the

mystery of the letter י (*yod*)—not included in the letter ז (*zayin*), rather *yod* alone, in the mystery of delicate letters.[85]

"One whose hair falls out will succeed in his affairs, and he is a deceiver, hungry in his home. He seems sin-fearing on the surface, not so within. This applies before he grows old.[86] If his hair falls out after he grows old, he becomes the opposite of how he was at first, whether for good or for bad.

"These words apply if hair falls out between his eyes above the brain, at the place where tefillin are worn.[87] If at another place on the head, not so: he is not [71b] a deceiver, but rather a gossiper—whispering, not out loud. Sometimes he is sin-fearing and sometimes not. This is in the mystery of the letter ז (*zayin*) when it includes the letter י (*yod*).[88]

"Until here, mysteries of hair for masters of qualities who know the ways of mysteries of Torah, to recognize the hiddenness of humans who are *in the image of Elohim*—unspecified—a name extending in various ways.[89]

"By mystery of the forehead, in the letter נ (*nun*), *consummation of the letter* ין (*zayin*)—sometimes included in the mystery of the letter *zayin* and sometimes alone.[90]

"A forehead that is narrow and angular, not round—this is a person whose mind is unsettled. He thinks he is wise, but he knows little. He is frightened in spirit, laughing with his tongue like a serpent.

"The furrows on his forehead are large and uneven; when he speaks, those furrows form on his forehead unevenly, while other lines on his forehead all lie even—with this one, a person should not associate except briefly, not for long. Whatever he does or thinks is for his own advantage; he does not consider the benefit of others. He is no master of secrets at all; this is: *One who goes about gossiping reveals a secret* (Proverbs 11:13). He does not consider his words at all. This one is in mystery of the

letter נ (*nun*), included in the letter ז (*zayin*); this one is not called *faithful of spirit* reliably.[91]

"A narrow, rounded forehead—this is a wise person in whatever he endeavors. Sometimes he is frightened in spirit. His love is joyous; he is compassionate to all. He contemplates many matters; if he engages in Torah, he will become very wise.

"Three upper, large furrows form on his forehead when he speaks—three furrows close to one eye and three furrows above the other eye. He cries when he is angry. This one is better than he appears to be. All matters of the world—whether actions or anything else—he throws behind his shoulders and does not care. Anyone who engages in Torah with him succeeds, [72a] more than in other, worldly matters. Sometimes his will cleaves to the blessed Holy One and sometimes not. In legal affairs he does not succeed; he is far removed from Judgment. This is mystery of the letter נ (*nun*) by itself, not included in the letter ז (*zayin*). Since it is not included in this letter, he is far removed from Judgment and does not abide there; his side is Compassion.[92]

"A forehead that is not rounded but large—this is a person who sometimes when he walks or stands bends his head. This divides into two aspects—aspects of madness. One aspect is visible madness: other people realize his madness, which is evident to all, and he is a fool. On his forehead are four large furrows. Sometimes when he speaks he wrinkles them on his forehead, and sometimes when the skin of his forehead is stretched and those furrows are not visible, other large wrinkles appear on the sides of his eyes. He laughs for no reason; his mouth is large. He is not a worthwhile person.

"The other aspect is concealed madness, and people do not perceive it. He becomes wise in what he endeavors, even in Torah—but not for its own sake, only to glorify himself before people. All in whispering and with a swelled heart, to show that he is righteous, but it is not so. All his

words are not for the sake of the blessed Holy One, but rather for people.[93] He conceives thoughts and conducts himself according to external manners, so that he will be noticed. This one is in mystery of the letter נ (*nun*), included in the letter ן׳ז (*zayin*).

"A large rounded forehead—he is intelligent, containing memory of all. He knows whatever he tries to do, even without an expert teaching him. He succeeds in whatever he endeavors—though in money, sometimes he succeeds and sometimes not. From a small thing, he envisions the great. He is called discerning. He does not care about matters of the world; even though he knows that he will be embarrassed [72b] because of them, he does not care about them or pay any attention. He is tenderhearted.[94]

"Two upper large wrinkles on his forehead and one wrinkle above one eye and one wrinkle above the other eye—thus there are three large wrinkles on his forehead, together with those of the eyes, except that the lower wrinkle is split over the eyes—this one ponders thoughts within, not outside, because in his actions he is unconcerned with people. He is afraid momentarily, not longer; as for pacification, he is pacified. His outer actions in the presence of others—these are only either childish or wise. This one is in the mystery of the letter נ (*nun*) by itself, not included in the letter ן׳ז (*zayin*). He is weak, not being included with these preceding letters, but rather adjacent to the letter ס (*samekh*), included with it and not with the preceding letters. Until here, mysteries of wisdom of the forehead.[95]

"By mystery of the eyes, in mystery of the letter ס (*samekh*); by the surrounding color and how the eye sits. An eye sitting perfectly, not sunken—this one is not a deceiver and is far from deception, which is totally lacking in him.[96]

"Colors of the eye are four. White outside, surrounding the eye, as in every person. Within it, black surrounding—

white and black combined as one. Within it, green, combined with black. Within it, that pupil of the eye, a black point. This is a person who laughs constantly and is overjoyed. He conceives positive thoughts, but those thoughts are not fulfilled because he eliminates them immediately from his will. He engages in worldly matters, and when he engages in heavenly matters he succeeds. This one must be fortified to engage in Torah, for he will succeed in it.[97]

"His eyebrows are thick, extending below. In those colors of the eye are red traces, elongated delicately. Those traces are called 'small letters of the eyes,' because if those colors of the eye [73a] shine radiantly, that radiance emits letters, revealed to those masters of qualities, among other subtle traces. This is in the letter ס (*samekh*), included with the letter ה (*he*).[98]

"Green eyes surrounded by white, and that green blending with the white—he is beloved, but he always thinks of his own benefit, without considering the harm of others at all. The color black does not appear in him—he is desirous, though not from the evil side; but if an opportunity arises from the evil side, he will not turn back. He is trustworthy with what is known, but with what is unknown he is not.[99] He is master of secrets concerning something secret until he hears that secret somewhere else; as soon as he hears it he reveals everything, and no secret remains with him at all, since all his words are imperfect. The colors of his eyes surrounded by white and green—this one is in the mystery of the letter ה (*he*), included with the letter ז (*zayin*) and the letter ס (*samekh*).[100]

"Yellowish-green eyes—madness lies in him, and due to madness he is a mouth speaking boastfully, acting like one who is arrogant.[101] Whoever attacks him, defeats him. He is unworthy of mysteries of Torah, since concerning those mysteries his heart is not calm, for he aggrandizes himself with them. This one is in the mystery of the letter ה (*he*),

included with the letter ז (*zayin*) alone, far removed from the letter ס (*samekh*)—since he acts arrogantly, he is far removed from the letter ס (*samekh*), not close to it. When this one speaks, he forms large furrows on his forehead.[102]

"White eyes surrounded by a little green—he is of an angry disposition, though he is usually compassionate. But when filled with anger, he has no compassion at all and turns cruel. He is no master of secrets. This one is in the letter מ (*mem*), included in the letter סמך (*samekh*).[103]

"Eyes white and green together, with a little black—this one is master of secrets and succeeds in them. If he begins [73b] successfully, he keeps on succeeding. His enemies cannot prevail against him; he dominates them entirely and they cringe before him. This one is in the mystery of the letter כ (*kaf*), included in the letter סמך (*samekh*). Therefore he gains dominion if he begins to. Until here, mysteries of the eyes for those masters of wisdom.[104]

"Mystery of the face for those masters of inner wisdom. For features of the face are not in external signs, but rather by impress of inner mysteries. For features of the face are transformed by features of impress of the concealed face of spirit dwelling within. From within that spirit appear features on the face outwardly, which are recognized by the wise.[105]

"Features of the face are revealed by spirit. There is a spirit in a human being, engraved with mysteries of letters, and all those letters lie concealed within that spirit. Corresponding to each face, impressions of those letters arise in the face. As those letters arise, so the face appears with etched features momentarily, appearing unenduringly—except for those masters of wisdom, who comprehend them enduringly, never to be forgotten.[106]

"The place called World That Is Coming is mystery of Torah, and from there issues mystery of Torah, in all those letters—twenty-two letters, totality of all. That river issuing

from Eden conveys all, and when those spirits and souls fly from it, they are all inscribed with the figure of those letters, and thus they all emerge. Therefore, the spirit of a human, inscribed with the figure of letters, forms a figure on the face."[107]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "If so, that spirit is not inscribed with a figure of Mother."[108]

They replied, "So we have heard from our Master: A figure of letters from the aspect above, and that spirit is inscribed with a figure of Mother. Figure of letters is hidden within, while figure of Mother protrudes.[109]

"Figure of Mother: face of human, face of lion, face of ox, face of eagle. Spirit forms a figure of each of them outwardly, momentarily, since whatever derives from the side [74a] of spirit protrudes, appears, and is hidden away. All these images appear drawn in the form of letters, although they are hidden. These four images appear momentarily to masters of vision who know mysteries of wisdom, gazing upon them.[110]

"First figure: When a person walks in the way of truth, those who know the mystery of their Lord gaze at him, because that spirit within is perfected, protruding a figure of all. That figure is the figure of a human, a figure more complete than all figures. This is the figure that passes momentarily before the eyes of the wise-hearted. This one, when they gaze upon his outer face—a face standing before eyes of the heart—they are filled with love for it.[111]

"Four signs of letters appear on it. One vein protrudes gently on the right side; another vein, including two others attached to it, on the left side. These four signs are four letters called עדות (*edut*), *testimony*. The sign is: ע (*ayin*)—the vein on the right side protruding gently. ד (*Dalet*) and those two letters joined to it—ת ,ו (*vav, tav*)—are the vein including two others. This is the mystery written: עדות (*edut*), *a testimony, He ordained it for Joseph* (Psalms 81:6), for

whoever saw him loved him in his heart, and in love he was perfected.[112]

"As for the seed of David, the appearance of colors is reversed. Therefore Samuel erred, as is written: *Look not at his appearance* (1 Samuel 16:7), for the Other Side was in Eliab, which was not so in David. For the features of David were concealed: the image of the Other Side was included in those features, and that image of the Other Side appeared in him first, passing before [Samuel's] eyes momentarily, frightening his heart; afterward, *goodly to look on, and YHVH is with him* (ibid. 12, 18)—this is *testimony* about him.[113]

"This image of the human includes all images, all included within. Such a one is not agitated in spirit; in time of his anger he is calm, his words calm, and immediately he is appeased.[114] [74b]

"Seed of David, in whom that image appears at first, passing momentarily before the eyes—in his anger he is calm, immediately appeased; but he retains enmity like a serpent in the end, for that side provokes this, surrounding on all sides. However, the kernel within the shell and the heart are upright and firm. This applies to the righteous; but the wicked are not divested of that first, evil image, by which they are utterly defiled.[115]

"Second figure: If a certain person does not walk so frequently on an evil way, and turns aside from that way, returning to his Lord—not that he is accustomed to correct ways, but rather that he had indulged in those [other] ways and turns off of them, returning to his Lord—upon this one, a good spirit begins to settle, overpowering the previous filth that was in him, and protruding momentarily to the gaze of eyes in the image of a mighty lion. Or when he sees him, that vision causes a mighty lion to pass momentarily through his heart. Afterward, when they look at this one's face, that face is one that a heart would not love,

momentarily; immediately, his heart returns and loves him. When they look at him, he is embarrassed, thinking that everyone knows about him; his face momentarily flushes with blood, then turning white or green.[116]

"There are three veins on his face. One on the right, extending across his face, connected with another, rising to his nose above. And two on the left, with one extending down from those two, joined to each. These are letters engraved on his face, protruding in panic, disquieted. Once he becomes settled and accustomed to the way of truth, they subside.

"Mystery of those letters is קרוב (*qarov*), near. This one was far, and now those letters protrude on his face, testifying about him feverishly. This sign is ק (*qof*) on the right side, other letters on the left side. [75a] Although other veins appear on his face, they do not protrude like these, except when he walks crookedly.[117]

"One who is the seed of David is reversed from this appearance. First he appears in the image of a human, afterward assuming the image of a lion, separating from the image of the Other Side. In all ways, the reverse of other human beings.[118]

"Third figure: If a certain person walks on an incorrect way, diverting his ways from ways of Torah, that holy spirit withdraws from him and another spirit appears in him—another image, protruding into the gaze of eyes of the wise-hearted momentarily in the image of an ox. Or, when they see him, that image passes through their hearts and they contemplate it.[119]

"Three red safflower seeds on the right side of his face, those being thin red veins, and three on the left. These are letters protruding in him. One is a thin vein in a circle, and two other thin ones above it, all in circles. Then, his eyes are sunken.[120]

“Mystery of those letters: One is כ (*kaf*); the other two are ר, ת (*resh, tav*)—and similarly on the left side. The mnemonic is what is written: הכרת (*Hakkarat*), *The appearance of, their faces testifies against them* (Isaiah 3:9). These letters protrude on the face more than all other veins. If he returns from left to right, that spirit is subdued and spirit of holiness is empowered; these veins subside and others protrude, as has been said.[121]

“Seed of David is reversed, appearing first in the image of a lion and afterward turning into the image of an ox. Two black veins on his face, one on the right and one on the left; these are letters, one called ר (*resh*) and one called ע (*ayin*). All, the reverse of other human beings.[122]

“Fourth figure: This is the figure of a person constantly poised to be mended for mystery of the past. This one appears in the sight of the wise-hearted in the image of an eagle. That spirit of his is a weak spirit. This one does not display protruding letters on his face, since these vanished from him, sinking at another time previously, withdrawn from him; so they do not protrude.[123]

“His secret: His eyes do not sparkle when he is joyful, nor when he cuts the hair on his head and trims his beard, because his spirit does not shine in letters and his former sparkle has subsided. He is incapable of being gazed upon through gazing at the face.[124] The mystery of this one: *I praise the dead, who have already died, more than the living, who are still alive* (Ecclesiastes 4:2). As for seed of David, *The secret of YHVH is for those who revere Him; to them He reveals His covenant* (Psalms 25:14).[125]

“In a human spirit letters are drawn, as has been said, and it protrudes them. This wisdom has been transmitted to the wise of heart, to know and recognize. Spirit abides in mystery of זה ספר (*Zeh sefer*), *This is the book* (Genesis 5:1), and all abides in this mystery except for appearance of the face, which is judged in another manner, according to

dominion [75b] of spirit or sinking of spirit. Happy are the wise, to whom all knowledge has been given![126]

"Until here, mystery of the face. From here on, mystery of the lips—with the letter פ (*pe*), included with mystery of the letter ס (*samekh*).[127]

"Large lips—this is a person who speaks gossip shamelessly and fearlessly. A master of dissension, transmitting slander between one and another, *unleashing strife among brothers* (Proverbs 6:19). He is no master of secrets, though when engaging in Torah he conceals secrets; but he is a master of the evil tongue, with no reverence in his heart.[128]

"This sign is the letter פ (*pe*), included with the letter ר (*resh*), though not in the letter ס (*samekh*).[129] This one seems to be righteous, but he is not sin-fearing and does not know how to strive for this, because all his words are mouthed, not embodied.[130]

"Lips severely shriveled, not thin—this is a person extremely hot-tempered, a master of insolence; he cannot bear anything. A master of gossip in public, without any shame at all; at times he engages in ridicule. This is someone who must be avoided.[131]

"If his beard is filled with hair, his evil tongue identifies him publicly; he has no shame, striving for strife.[132] He succeeds in worldly affairs, sees the downfall of his enemies. This one is *winking his eyes* (Proverbs 6:13).[133] Of him is said *A wicked man is brazen-faced* (ibid. 21:29). This one is in the mystery of the letter פ (*pe*) by itself, not included with the letter ס (*samekh*) at all, sometimes joined with the letter ר (*resh*).[134]

"In this letter ר (*resh*) is included one whose ears are רברבין (*ravrevin*), large—stupidity in his heart, madness in his spirit. If his ears are small, standing erect, he is wise-hearted, aroused, eager to engage in anything. This mystery is the letter י (*yod*), included in all other letters.[135]

“Until here, mysteries of human images. From here on, other mysteries in letters of our Master—not inhering in the countenance, but rather to know mysteries of this verse on supernal rungs, concerning times and cycles of this world, of which we have not been proven worthy.”[136]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “My children, you are worthy in the world that is coming! Happy are the eyes worthy of seeing this, when I enter the world that is coming! Together with you, my soul will call out this verse to the Ancient of Days: *You prepare a table before me, in front of my enemies; You refresh my head with oil, my cup overflows* (Psalms 23:5). And the blessed Holy One will call out for us: *Open the gates, so that a righteous nation, keeping faith, may enter* (Isaiah 26:2).”

They too opened,[137] saying, “It is written: *Human hands were under their wings…* (Ezekiel 1:8). This verse has been established by the Companions: those hands are for accepting penitents returning to the blessed Holy One.[138] *Hands*—forms and supernal mysteries that the blessed Holy One has placed in the human being, arranging them in the fingers, outwardly and inwardly, and in the palm.[139]

“When the blessed Holy One created the human, He arranged in him all forms of higher mysteries of the world above and all forms of lower mysteries of the lower world, all engraved in a person, who stands in the image of God, for he is called ‘creation of כף (*kaf*), the palm.’[140]

“Mystery of *kaf,* palm—of this letter called כף (*kaf*)—as is written: *Elohim created the human in His image* (Genesis 1:27). This is mystery of the letter *kaf*. This letter contains supernal mysteries and supernal forms. On this *kaf* depend ten utterances, on the right and on the left—five on the right and five on the left—and they are one, in single mystery.[141]

“We have learned: It is written: *I too will strike* כף (*kaf*), *palm, against palm* (Ezekiel 21:22)—causing conflict between the two, and blessings will depart from the world, since the glory of Israel has been given to other nations.[142] When they join as one, it is written: *one golden* כף (*kaf*), *ladle, of ten shekels* (Numbers 7:14)—alluding to a single bond. When unified, it is written: *Elohim created the human in His image; in the image of Elohim He created him* (Genesis 1:27). *Elohim created*—ascending in thought, in inner mystery. את האדם (*Et ha-adam*), *the human*—mystery of male and female as one. *In the image of Elohim*—mystery of another *kaf,* palm.[143]

“When the human was created, what is written? *You clothed me in skin and flesh* (Job 10:11). [76a] What then is the human if not skin and flesh, and bones and sinews? But surely, the human being is nothing but soul! And these that we have mentioned—skin, flesh, bones, and sinews—are all merely a garment; they are a person’s clothing, not the human. And when this human departs, he is stripped of those garments that he is wearing.[144]

“The skin in which a person is clothed and all those bones and sinews all inhere in mystery of supernal wisdom, corresponding to the pattern above. Skin, corresponding above, as our Master has taught concerning those curtains, and it is written: *skins* (Exodus 25:5). For the garments above covering the garment are expanse of heaven—outer garment. The curtains are the inner garment—a protective membrane.[145]

“Bones and sinews are chariots and all those forces stationed within. All of them are garments for what is within: mystery of אדם (*adam*), human, who is innermost.

“So too, mystery below. The human is the innermost within, his garments corresponding to what is above. Bones and sinews correspond, as we have said, to those chariots and camps. Flesh covers those camps and chariots, standing outside; this is the mystery conveyed to the Other

Side. Skin, covering all, corresponds to those heavens covering all. All of them, garments clothing the innermost within, mystery of human. All a mystery, below corresponding above.[146]

"So, *Elohim created the human in His image; in the image of Elohim He created him* (Genesis 1:27)—twice here *Elohim*, one pertaining to male and one pertaining to female. Mystery of human below inheres entirely in mystery above.[147]

"In the heaven covering all, impressions were made, thereby showing and revealing—through those inlaid impressions—concealed matters and secrets. Those are impressions of stars and constellations inlaid in this heaven covering outside. Similarly, skin—external covering of a person—is a heaven covering all, containing impressions and traces. Those are stars and constellations of this skin, a covering heaven, through which concealed matters and secrets are shown and revealed—stars and constellations eyed by the wise of heart, gazing upon them to know.[148]

"Gazing at the face, in the mysteries we have mentioned, when it shines, free of anger. This is the mystery of *the astrologers, the stargazers* (Isaiah 47:13). When anger dominates a person, another rule is transmitted in order to perceive—something not granted to master or know when a cloud dominates the sky. However, gazing at the face follows the path of truth, when the face shines and a person stands firm; then those impressions and all that is gazed upon can be judged more accurately—even though in all ways all the wise can gaze.[149]

"Lines of hands and lines of fingers, inside, all inhere in other mysteries, revealing concealed matters. These are stars shining, to gaze into constellations in supernal aspects.[150]

"Fingers stand in supernal mysteries. Fingernails, poised to cover from outside—as those mysteries have been established, they are faces on the outside, containing

secrets for those sorcerers who gaze at fingernails in the radiance of another entity controlling them, and those sorcerers defile that place.[151]

“In fingernails sometimes fine white stars shine, resembling lentil seeds, and they are sunken like a nail in a board. They are not like those other white spots that are not sunken but standing out. Those not sunken are insubstantial, but these that are sunken and white, like lentil seeds, are substantial—a good omen for a person and he will succeed at that time, or a decree has been issued against him, from which he will be saved.[152]

“Hands in supernal mysteries. [76b] Lines in fingers inside; in the hands, large lines; small, thin supernal lines in the right; in those fingers, small lines. In the little finger on the right are fine impressions; this finger stands poised constantly over actions regarding the way.[153]

“In this finger are lines, formed when the finger is folded. These are not to be pondered unless they are increased. If two others are added to that line formed when the finger is folded, the way is not propitious; if he acts he will not succeed. Unless they stand lengthwise between one impression and another when he pulls the skin back, and those impressions remain recognizable—this one will succeed on the way. This sign is three, three widthwise, and four lengthwise. This mystery is ז (*zayin*) of small letters.[154]

“One impression lengthwise, and two, two widthwise—on the way he will hear of things in the near future, but they will not benefit him.

“Four impressions lengthwise and four impressions widthwise—the way is propitious with great effort and eventually to his benefit. This mystery is ז (*zayin*) of medium letters, between small and large.

“Five small ones impressed widthwise below and five above widthwise and four lengthwise—he feels relaxed at home and is lazy. The way is prepared for him, yet he does not want to act. If he acted, he would succeed on that way;

but he does not do it—he is lazy. This mystery is ז (*zayin*) that is simple.[155]

"In the middle finger. This finger stands poised to realize the action that he contemplated. If one line stands lengthwise between lines widthwise, this one conceives thoughts and they depart from him; he is afraid and does not act, and that thought is not actualized at all.

"If there are two lines lengthwise that remain standing when the skin is stretched back, this one has no thoughts. He thinks momentarily and it is actualized—not a thought that he has contemplated at all, rather an impulsive, petty thought; but contemplation and thought, no.[156]

"If three impressions lengthwise, and widthwise two or three, when the skin is stretched back, this is an intelligent person, conceiving thoughts. All those thoughts tending toward the blessed Holy One will be fulfilled by him, while other thoughts, not so.

"If four or five lengthwise, with stretching of skin, as we have said—when they rest upon the width in three or four, or two or more—this is a person whose thoughts are malicious and who gloats over them. His beard and eyebrows are red; he thinks maliciously and gloats. He is short-lived. Smart, yet constantly yielding to qualities of evil. He succeeds, but eventually departs from the world.[157]

"Remedy for this is returning to God. Then three or four impressions appear, resting upon two: three impressions or four lengthwise resting upon two widthwise. For according to a person's conduct, lines change from time to time, and this is the mystery of *the one who brings forth their array by number… because of His great might and vast power, not one is missing* (Isaiah 40:26). Just as the blessed Holy One changes powers and seasons in the stars of heaven: one day, like this, and the next day, like that—corresponding to the evening prayer: 'and changes the seasons and arranges the stars,' that is, according to the change of

seasons, so He arranges the stars. Corresponding to אדם (*adam*), the human, within, all His actions appear in this heaven; so it appears in the skin of this lower human, which is heaven, skin covering all. All according to the pattern of the human within, for sometimes He abides in Judgment and sometimes in Compassion; according to that pattern precisely, He appears outside, sometimes in this pattern, sometimes in that pattern. Similarly below, in this human, as we have said: sometimes in this pattern, sometimes in that pattern. This mystery is ז (*zayin*), including the letter י (*yod*).[158]

"These mysteries lie in the fingers [77a] of the right hand, in the little one and in the large one. Your mnemonic is: *The small like the great shall you hear out* (Deuteronomy 1:17). These two fingers inhere in these mysteries, and so it is in the mysteries we have learned from our Master, though not in the mysteries of Rav Yeiva Sava.[159]

"From here on, other lines, all called תולדות (*toledot*), *generations,* and they are *generations of adam* (Genesis 5:1), as is written: *generations of heaven* (ibid. 2:4). As has been said, this mystery corresponds entirely with that one. *Generations of adam*—in all those features on the face and in all that we have mentioned, and in these *generations* of lines of the hands, appearing in inner mysteries, fittingly.[160]

"זה ספר (*Zeh sefer*), *This is the book of, the generations of adam* (Genesis 5:1)—for lines. ז-ר ה-פ-ץ (*Zayin, resh, he, pe,* final *tsadi*), a mnemonic, mysteries for the wise-hearted; ר-ז ה-ס-ף (*resh, zayin, he, samekh,* final *pe*), five letters in five gates, to know Wisdom by contemplation.[161]

"First gate: ר (*resh*). In the hand are thin lines and large lines, all interlaced. There are large lines in the hand—when they are two lengthwise and two widthwise, connected, this is in the mystery of the letter ה (*he*) and in the mystery of the letter ר (*resh*), thrusting away the letter ז (*zayin*) and grasping these two letters: lengthwise grasping

he, widthwise grasping *resh*, and its mnemonic is ה-ר (*he, resh*).[162]

"This applies similarly to the left hand, in these large lines. But those small lines received by the right are not received by the left. The right grasps one thin line above lengthwise and one thin line below, connecting with those two large lines. Widthwise, there is one thin line resting upon it. In the left, not so; its mystery inheres in the right, not in the left.[163]

"This is a person who sometimes desires being home and sometimes being on the way. This one's heart is not calm with either one: when he is at home, he yearns for the way; when he is on the way, he yearns for home. He succeeds constantly on the way and sometimes at home. This one succeeds in Torah and in secrets of Torah, if he strives for them. This one sees the downfall of his enemies; many derive benefit from him. He is lazy in worldly affairs. If he is aroused, those above are aroused to favor him. He proves worthy through his words. This one is desirous and scatters money; he is generous. His prayer is heard. Financially, he has ups and downs.

"This one sometimes breaks his heart before his Lord. Then three small lines appear, crossing that thin line added to those two widthwise, and this mystery is ה (*he*) joined with ר (*resh*).[164] This is home, this is the way; this is joy, this is sadness; this is benefit, this is lazy; this is generous, this is desirous and scattering money; this is breaking his heart and turning back to his Lord.

"Second gate: ז (*zayin*), in the right.[165] In a castle of absorption, impressions appear.[166] When three large lines appear widthwise and two large ones lengthwise, one of those lengthwise connecting with the two widthwise and the other one not connecting—this one has a defect in his seed, from his father's side or his mother's side. Then, below those three lines widthwise appear two thin lines,

connecting with them below. This is a person mending his deeds in the presence of other people, yet his heart is untrue.[167]

"When he grows old, he resumes mending. Then those two lines lengthwise are connected with the widthwise, one with each; and two others with them in the middle—thin, lengthwise—and three thin ones widthwise. This mystery is ז (*zayin*) joined with the letter ר (*resh*). When he grows old and turns back to God, as we have said, and is refined in the mystery of the letter *resh* and joined with the letter *zayin*—afterward, when this one is mended, he is constantly whispering, all his actions in a whisper. However, he is not established fittingly, because that defect has not yet abandoned its claim on him.[168]

"From here we learn that if one disqualifies his seed, for three generations that defect does not give up [77b] rattling. Therefore we have learned: 'Woe to the person who disqualifies his seed and does not care about the honor of his Lord!' 'Disqualifies his seed,' surely![169]

"After that defect yields, lines appear in the right hand, four and five—four widthwise, five lengthwise. This mystery is ז (*zayin*), joined with the letter ה (*he*). This one sometimes succeeds and sometimes does not. He succeeds in Torah, and toward the end of his days he succeeds even financially.

"Third gate: ה (*he*), in the right. When five lines appear widthwise and three lengthwise, and the middle line of those three appears, this is in the mystery of the letter *he,* supported by the letter ס (*samekh*). When that middle line appears, joining and intersecting those five lines widthwise, this is a person who is sad and angry at home, but not so among people. He is stingy at home and hungry, though sometimes not; outside his house, not so. He succeeds in worldly affairs. When he engages in Torah, he contemplates a little and boasts about it. He is faithful, but not always; and when he is not faithful, he displays a truthful manner

but is not completely true. In legal affairs he will succeed. He is trustworthy with secrets of Torah. This one is in the mystery of the letter ה (*he*), joined with the letter ס (*samekh*).[170]

"If there are four lines widthwise and five lengthwise, two of those lengthwise intersecting those four, this one is happy at home and seems sad outside—but it is not so, for as soon as he speaks with people, he manifests happiness and they enjoy his words.[171]

"Three small lines intersecting those lengthwise—this one has one black mark on his body, with three hairs hanging from that mark. The mark is round, with one prong at the top. This mark is called by the wise-hearted, who know these mysteries, Eagle Head. This mark sometimes appears between his shoulders, sometimes on the right arm, and sometimes on the right hand on his fingers.[172]

"If this mark—Eagle Head—is perfectly aligned, he will ascend to wealth and honor. If that Eagle Head is turned backward, he will sometimes succeed; but when he grows old, he will attain greater wealth and far greater honor than in his youth, and he will succeed in Torah if he strives for it.

"Eagle Head sometimes appears black and sometimes slightly reddish, not deeply colored; sometimes hairy, sometimes smooth. All is one omen, judged according to one law.

"If that red hue is colored more deeply, maintaining its hue, it has been colored recently, for these colors are sometimes radiant and sometimes dim. If that red is deeply colored and shining, then the left hand has three lines lengthwise and three widthwise, with a thin one above those widthwise and a thin one above those lengthwise. In the right hand, one is added only widthwise. This person lay with a menstruant and did not return to his Lord.[173]

"When he turns in repentance, those lines in the left hand remain, while the one added in the right is eliminated

from him, and that red is withdrawn, less radiant. Sometimes, even though he has returned, that red is not eliminated for some time. This one is in the mystery of the letter ה (*he*)—the letter ס (*samekh*) is withdrawn, substituted by the letter ץ (final *tsadi*)—and the letter *he* joins with the final letter *tsadi*. This one needs mending of his soul urgently; it is incumbent upon the wise of heart who sees him to say, 'Go, heal yourself!'[174]

"If there are three lines lengthwise and one widthwise, this is in the mystery of the letter ה (*he*) by itself, and sometimes joined with the letter ז (*zayin*). This one is a person craving worldly gains—and if not, chasing after women, his lust for adultery. Although he lusts after worldly gains, this does not leave him and he feels no shame. His eyes are sunken, and he speaks with them.[175]

"If he returns to his Lord, lines change: three widthwise and one lengthwise—those two, thin, [78a] abiding enduringly. Then his desire is greater for his wife and he clings to her. One very thin line enters between those two thin ones. Then the letter ה (*he*) joins with the letter ז (*zayin*).[176]

"If there are one line lengthwise and four widthwise, with three thin ones standing above the one, and one above those four—and on the left arm he has three thin streaks, generated just a few days ago, with a single hair hanging from the top one—this one pursues adultery with his neighbor's wife. He is a master of insolence; he threatens with his left eye, not uttering a single word, and fulfills. Being a master of insolence, he does not care about the honor of his Lord—to return to Him. Afterward a serpent or a red man kills him.[177]

"If there are four lengthwise and three widthwise, and those ascending are eliminated from him, this one has broken his heart before his Lord and turned in repentance. Then he is in the mystery of the letter פ (*pe*), joined with the

letter ה (*he*). Of these and of similar ones is written *Peace, peace to the far and the near* (Isaiah 57:19).[178]

"Until here, all those mysteries of *the generations of adam*—generations born in him from time to time, according to a person's ways. Happy is the share of those who sit before our Master and have been privileged to hear from his mouth secrets of Torah! Happy are they in this world, and happy are they in the world that is coming!"[179]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Happy are you, Companions, who are not baffled by any mysteries! How many supernal places await you in the world that is coming!"[180]

He opened, saying, "*As for you,* תחזה (*teḥezeh*), *you shall behold, from all the people men of caliber, revering God, men of truth, hating bribery* (Exodus 18:21). This verse has been established; but it is not written תבחר (*tivḥar*), *you shall choose,* rather *teḥezeh, you shall behold*—by vision of the eyes. How? By human features, by these six aspects that you have mentioned, all in this verse.[181]

"*As for you, you shall behold*—one, by the hair. *From all the people*—by the forehead, two. *Men of caliber*—three, by the face. *Revering God*—four, by the eyes. *Men of truth*—by the lips, five. *Hating bribery*—by the hands, by their lines, six. For these are signs by which to recognize people, those upon whom the spirit of wisdom rests.[182]

"Even so, Moses did not need this; rather, what is written? *Moses chose men of caliber from all Israel* (Exodus 18:25)—because Holy Spirit came to him, through whom he saw all. How do we know? As is written: *When they have some matter, he comes to me* (Exodus 18:16). It is not written *they come to me,* but rather *he comes*—Holy Spirit who came to him, through whom he knew, so he did not need all this examining and inspecting; rather, Moses knew instantly.[183]

"Similarly, King Solomon, by the throne—even though Holy Spirit rested upon him. For whoever approached the throne was overcome with fear and awe, and thereby he

judged cases without witnesses—because there were images on the throne, and if anyone approached with a lie, that image would vibrate and Solomon would know he was coming with a lie. So, fear of that throne fell upon all, and they all became virtuous in his presence.[184]

"King Messiah, by smell, as is written: *His scenting will be by awe of YHVH: not by sight of his eyes will he judge…* (Isaiah 11:3).[185] These three judged the world without witnesses or warning; the rest of the inhabitants of the world, by word of witnesses, by command of Torah.[186] The wise who recognize those features, providing remedy for people and healing their souls—happy are they in this world and happy are they in the world that is coming!"[187]

On the third new moon [*after the Children of Israel's going out from the land of Egypt, on this day they came to the Wilderness of Sinai*] (Exodus 19:1)—ruled by Uriel, empowered prince, accompanied by 365 myriads of camps, corresponding to the number of days of the year. All of them have 365 keys of light—of that light radiating from supernal inner *ḥashmal,* treasured and concealed, in which mysteries of holy supernal letters of the Holy Name [78b] are suspended.[188]

This is the mystery of *man of completion* (Genesis 25:27), master of the house, *husband of Elohim* (Deuteronomy 33:1). *Completion*—for here is completion and knot of tefillin, and Jacob was *man of completion*.[189] In his image abides mystery of inner supernal *ḥashmal,* concealed and treasured away. All hidden supernal radiancies he grasps and they issue from him, and all those camps grasp the keys of that light radiating from *ḥashmal*.[190]

That light is comprised of two lights, and they are one. The first light is a white light, which the eye cannot control; this is the light treasured away for the righteous, as is written: *Light is sown for the righteous* (Psalms 97:11). The

second light is a sparkling light, flashing red. Two lights coalesce as one, becoming one.[191]

Uriel, empowered prince, and all those camps absorb that light. Being comprised of two, it is called Twins, and therefore [that month] is ruled by the constellation called in its mystery Gemini (Twins), and therein Torah was given. From here rungs extend below, until attaining names to conduct the world.[192]

None of the other constellations has a mouth or tongue, whereas this one has mouth and tongue, merging as one. Therefore, of Torah is written *Meditate on it day and night* (Joshua 1:8)—*day* corresponding to tongue, *night* corresponding to mouth. All, merging as one; in all, attaining Twins.[193]

Of this mystery is written *Look, there were* תומים (*tomim*), *twins, in her womb!* (Genesis 25:24). Now, if you say that this applies to both of them—not so, for Esau does not attain this mystery. Rather, it applies to Jacob, whom Scripture lavishes with praise for being in the belly of that righteous woman. And since that wicked one was there, א (*alef*) withdrew. All is one mystery.[194]

Jacob obtained in his mystery two months—Nisan and Iyyar—and he is included in the mystery of Sivan, which is Gemini (Twins). Esau obtained in his mystery two months—Tammuz and Av—but he is not to be found and vanishes; for Elul is not his, not even Av—just nine days belong to him and no more. He vanishes and is not to be found, is not in the mystery of Twins; rather, he isolated himself, straying to the Other Side, into nothingness and desolation, as is said: *The enemy has come to an end—ruins everlasting…* (Psalms 9:7).[195]

Since Jacob is Twins, Torah was given to his children in the month of Twins. Torah inheres in the mystery of twins: Written Torah and Oral Torah.[196] In the third month, to a triple nation, on triple rungs, a triple Torah: Pentateuch, Prophets, and Writings—and all is one.[197]

On the third new moon after the Children of Israel's going out from the land of Egypt, [*on this day they came to the Wilderness of Sinai*] (Exodus 19:1). We have already established this portion, this verse, above. Rabbi Ḥiyya taught, "At the time when Israel arrived at Mount Sinai, the blessed Holy One gathered the seed and examined them all, and among all the seed of Israel He found no blemish; rather, all were seed of truth, all scions of truth.[198]

"At that moment, the blessed Holy One said to Moses, 'Now I wish to give the Torah to Israel. Draw them by love of the patriarchs, by the love that I have shown them, and by the signs that I have performed for them. Respond with these words.'"[199]

Rabbi Yose said in the name of Rabbi Yehudah, "The blessed Holy One said to Moses as follows: 'In this matter be My faithful messenger, drawing Israel after Me.'"

Moses went up to Elohim... (Exodus 19:3). *Moses went up to Elohim*—to the place where the wings of *Shekhinah* are spread, as is said: *He bent the heavens and came down*... (Psalms 18:10).[200]

Moses went up. Rabbi Yehudah opened, "*Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in the hollow of his hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if you know?* (Proverbs 30:4)."

It has been taught: Rabbi Yehudah said, "As long as engravings of the supernal King are aligned, all worlds are in joy and all deeds are aligned in existence, as is said: *YHVH's deeds—how awesome they are* (Exodus 34:10).[201] What does this mean: *how awesome they are*?"

Rabbi El'azar said, "Completeness of all, as is said: *the great, mighty, and awesome God* (Deuteronomy 10:17). What is [79a] *awesome*? As is said: *Jacob was* איש תם (*ish tam*), *a simple man* (Genesis 25:27)—according to its

translation: ‘a complete man,’ completed by all. Similarly, all deeds of the blessed Holy One are perfectly complete in utter fulfillment.”[202]

It has been taught: Rabbi Yose said, “One day I was standing in the presence of Rabbi Yehudah Sava.[203] I asked him, ‘Concerning what is written: *He was awestruck and said, “How awesome is this place!”* (Genesis 28:17), what prompted him to say that it was *awesome*?’[204]

“He replied, ‘He saw completeness of holy faith appearing in that place as above, and wherever completeness appears is called *awesome*.’[205]

“I said to him, ‘If so, then why is it translated “awe” and not “complete”?’[206]

“He replied, ‘There is no awe except where completeness appears, as is written: *Be in awe of YHVH, you His holy ones, for those in awe of Him lack nothing* (Psalms 34:10)—as implied by what is said: *lack nothing*. Wherever nothing is lacking, completeness is found.’”

It has been taught: *Who has gone up to heaven?* (Proverbs 30:4). Rabbi Yose said, “This is Moses, as is written: *Moses went up to Elohim* (Exodus 19:3).[207]

“*Who has gathered the wind in the hollow of his hands?* (Proverbs, ibid.)—this is Aaron, as is written: *a double handful of fine aromatic incense* (Leviticus 16:12).[208]

“*Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment?* (Proverbs, ibid.)—this is Elijah, as is written: *There will be no dew or rain these years except by my word* (1 Kings 17:1).[209]

“*Who has established all the ends of earth?* (Proverbs, ibid.)—this is Abraham, of whom is written *These are the generations of heaven and earth* בהבראם (*be-hibbare’am*), *when they were created* (Genesis 2:4); do not read *be-hibbare’am, when they were created*, but rather באברהם (*be-Avraham*), through Abraham.”[210]

He taught this, and then he said, “*Who has gone up to heaven* (Proverbs, ibid.)—this is the blessed Holy One, of

whom is written *God has gone up with a shout of joy* (Psalms 47:6).[211]

"*Who has gathered* רוח (*ruaḥ*), *the wind, in the hollow of his hands?* (Proverbs, ibid.)—this is the blessed Holy One, of whom is written *In whose hand is the soul of every living thing and ruaḥ, the breath of, all human flesh* (Job 12:10).[212]

"*Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment?* (Proverbs, ibid.)—this is the blessed Holy One, of whom is written *He wraps up the waters in His thick clouds* (Job 26:8).

"*Who has established all the ends of earth?* (Proverbs, ibid.)—this is the blessed Holy One, of whom is written *on the day that YHVH Elohim made earth and heaven* (Genesis 2:4)."[213]

He said further, "*Who has gone up to heaven?…* (Proverbs, ibid.)—these are four bonds of the world: fire, air, water, and dust."[214]

Rabbi Yeisa said, "It seems that Rabbi Yose's words are unsustainable!"[215]

When these words reached Rabbi Shim'on, he placed his hands on Rabbi Yose's head and blessed him, saying, "You have spoken well! So it is!" Then he asked him, "How do you know this?"[216]

He replied, "So I learned from my father, who spoke in the name of Rav Hamnuna Sava."[217]

One day Rabbi Shim'on was sitting at the gate of Sepphoris. Rabbi Yeisa said to him, "Concerning what Rabbi Yose said: '*Who has gone up to heaven and come down?…* (Proverbs 30:4)'—once he said, 'This is Moses'; then he said, 'This is the blessed Holy One'; then he said, 'These are four bonds: fire, air, water, and dust.' Yet I saw that my Master blessed him!"[218]

He replied, "Surely, he spoke well, and so it is. All is one entity, all those words fulfilled in the blessed Holy One, all evenly balanced."[219]

Rabbi Yeisa was excited by Rabbi Shim'on's words and said, "So it is! Look, another time I heard from my Master: *These are the generations of heaven and earth* בהבראם (*be-hibbare'am*), *when they were created* (Genesis 2:4)—do not read *be-hibbare'am, when they were created,* but rather באברהם (*be-Avraham*), through Abraham, as is written: *I declare, 'The world is built on love'* (Psalms 89:3). But all is fine![220]

"What does the end of the verse indicate: *What is his name, and what is his son's name, if you know* (Proverbs 30:4)? *What is his name?*—granted. But *what is his son's name?*—what does this mean?"[221]

He replied, "Mystery of the matter I have already taught to my son, Rabbi El'azar."

He said to him, "Please tell me, Master, for in a dream I asked you about this and you told me, but I forgot it."

He said, "If I tell you, will you remember?"

He replied, "Certainly, for today I will repeat it."[222]

He said, "Mystery of the matter corresponds to what is written: *My son, My firstborn, is Israel* (Exodus 4:22), and *Israel, in whom I glory* (Isaiah 49:3). This inheres in supernal mystery, and thus is called *his son* (Proverbs, ibid.)."[223]

He said, "Let my Master's mind be at rest, for I already know this secret." Meanwhile, Rabbi Yeisa could not remember. He became distraught, and went home and slept. In a dream he was shown a book of *aggadah,* in which was written: "*Ḥokhmah* and *Tif'eret* in His sanctuary." He awoke and went to Rabbi Shim'on, kissed his hands, and said, "This is what I saw in a dream. Another time I saw a [79b] a book of *aggadah* displayed before me, in which was written: '*Ḥokhmah* above, *Tif'eret* below; in His sanctuary, next to them.' And so I found it on my lips."[224]

Rabbi Shim'on said to him, "You are still too young to enter the ranks of Reapers of the Field, yet all has been revealed to you! This is the meaning of the verse: *What is*

his name, and what is his son's name, if you know? *Ḥokhmah* is *his name,* *Tif'eret* is *his son*."[225]

It has been taught: *Moses went up to* *Elohim* (Exodus 19:3). Happy is the share of Moses, who attained this honor to which Torah testifies!

Rabbi Yehudah taught, "Come and see the difference between Moses and other inhabitants of the world! When others ascend, they ascend to wealth, prestige, and royalty. But when Moses ascended, what is written? *Moses went up to* *Elohim*. Happy is his share!"

Rabbi Yose said, "From here the Companions concluded: 'If one comes to purify himself, he is assisted,' as is written: *Moses went up to* *Elohim*. What is written? *And* *YHVH* *called to him* (Exodus 19:3), for whoever desires to come near is brought near."[226]

YHVH called to him from the mountain, saying… (Exodus 19:3).[227] Rabbi Yitsḥak opened, "*Happy is one You choose and bring near—he will dwell in Your courts!* (Psalms 65:5). Happy is the share of the human being whom the blessed Holy One desires and draws near to dwell in the holy palace! For whomever He desires for His service is inscribed with insignia from above, revealing that he has been chosen by the supernal Holy One to dwell in His abode. Whoever bears that sign passes through all gates above, with no one hindering him."[228]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Happy is the share of Moses, of whom is written *Happy is one You choose and bring near,* and similarly, *Moses alone shall come near* *YHVH, but they shall not come near* (Exodus 24:2)![229]

"*YHVH* *called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob'*—females—*'and tell the sons of Israel'*—males."[230]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "כה (*Koh*), *Thus, shall you say*—as is said: *Koh, Thus, shall you bless* (Numbers 6:23); *Your*

devoted ones יברכו כה (*yevarekhukha*), *will bless You* (Psalms 145:10)—יברכו כה (*yevarekhu koh*), *will bless koh*.[231]

"כה תאמר (*Koh tomar*), *Thus will say, to the house of Jacob*—by saying, namely from the aspect of Judgment. ותגיד (*Ve-taggeid*), *and tell, the sons of Israel*—as is said: *He told you His covenant* (Deuteronomy 4:13); *I have told today to YHVH your God* (ibid. 26:3). *The sons of Israel*—males, deriving from the aspect of Compassion."[232]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "Since we have reached this, why: *I have told today to YHVH your God* (Deuteronomy 26:3)? The verse should read *to YHVH our God*."[233]

Rabbi Shim'on replied, "Is this the only one? Look at what is written: *For YHVH your God is bringing you to a good land* (Deuteronomy 8:7); *that YHVH your God is giving to you* (ibid. 7:16); *for YHVH your God is a consuming fire* (ibid. 4:24)—all of them so![234]

"However, we have learned as follows: 'Whoever lives in the land of Israel is like one who has a God, and whoever lives outside the land is like one who has no God.' Why? Because holy seed culminates in the Holy Land, and *Shekhinah* dwells in Her domain, one depending on the other. Moses said *your God* only to those who were about to enter the Holy Land and greet *Shekhinah*. As for his not saying *our God,* Moses was not worthy of entering the land. Therefore *your God,* precisely, everywhere, since they were about to enter there.[235]

"Here, however, is written *You shall come to the priest who will be in those days, and you shall say to him, 'I have told today to YHVH your God* [*that I have come to the land*]' (Deuteronomy 26:3)—look, they were dwelling in the land; why *your God* and not *our God*? Well, they had to show and acknowledge that due to supernal *Ḥesed* they had attained all this, were dwelling in the land, and had entered there, and He had bestowed upon them all that goodness. Therefore they said these words to the priest, not to anyone

else, as is written: *I have told today to YHVH your God*—certainly so, since he comes from the side of *Ḥesed*.[236]

"*Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob* (Exodus 19:3)—in the place befitting them. *And tell the sons of Israel* (ibid.)—in the complete place befitting them. For *Jacob* and *Israel* attained two rungs, and onto one they ascend, though *Israel* is called 'consummation of all.'[237] [80a] *And tell the sons of Israel*—revealing wisdom, relating in the spirit of wisdom the steadfast kindness bestowed upon them by the blessed Holy One, as is written: *He told you His covenant* (Deuteronomy 4:13)."[238]

It has been taught: Rabbi Yose said, "Once I was walking on the way, accompanied by my son, Rabbi Ḥiyya. While we were walking, we came upon a man who was gathering medicinal herbs in the field. We approached him and I asked, 'My good man, why a bundle of bundles of herbs?'[239]

"He did not raise his head or say anything. I asked him once again, and he said nothing. I said to Rabbi Ḥiyya, my son, 'This man is either hard of hearing, or a fool, or wise.' We sat down near him. Afterward, he took those herbs, tied them, and wrapped them in vine leaves.

"He said to us, 'I see that you are Jews, and Jews are said to be wise. If I didn't have pity on you now, you would be shunned by humans, like a leper, who is totally isolated—because I saw that the scent of a certain herb near you entered your bodies, and you would be outcast for three days. But eat this wild garlic and you will be healed.'[240]

"We ate some of it—since it was right there in front of us—and we fell asleep, and we were swaddled in sweat for a long time. Afterward we woke up. That man said to us, 'Now your God is with you, for you found me, since the cure of your bodies has been accomplished through me.'[241]

"As we were walking, he said to us, 'Every person should converse with another person appropriately: with

females appropriately, with men appropriately, with a man among men appropriately.'

"I said to Rabbi Ḥiyya, my son, 'This corresponds with what is written: *Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel* (Exodus 19:3).'[242]

"He said to us, 'You noticed that I didn't raise my head or speak with you—because I am the greatest expert in herbs of this entire generation, and I learned from my father the properties of all genuine herbs, and all year long I dwell among them.[243] Now, as for this herb that you saw me wrap in these vine leaves—in my house there is a certain place, on the northern side,[244] and in that place is lodged a millstone, from whose eye emerges a man with two heads and an unsheathed sword in his hand, and every day he torments us. So I gathered this herb; now follow me and you will see this herb's power and what the supreme God has revealed in the world—no one knows His ways fully with eyes and heart.'[245]

"We followed him. As we were walking on the way, he bent down to a hole in the ground and inserted some of that herb. Out came a snake with a huge head. He took a scarf and bound it like a little goat. We were frightened; he said to us, 'Follow me.'

"When we reached his house, we saw that place in the dark behind a wall. He took a lamp and kindled a fire around the area of the millstone. He said to us, 'Don't be frightened by what you see and don't say anything.' Meanwhile, he loosened the snake's bonds, pounded some of that herb in a mortar, and put it on the snake's head. The snake entered that eye of the millstone, and we heard a noise of the whole place quaking. We wanted to escape; that man grasped our hands, saying, 'Don't be afraid, come close to me!'[246]

"Just then, the snake emerged, dripping blood. The man took some of that herb and put it on its head as before. It entered that eye of the millstone; shortly, we saw a man

with two heads coming out of that eye with the snake wound around his neck. Three times he entered that eye of the millstone and emerged, saying, ‘Chameleon, chameleon, woe to his mother who brought him to that place!’[247]

“Just then, the millstone was torn from its place, and both man and serpent came out, fell down, and died. As for us, immense fear surrounded us. That man said, ‘This is the power of the herb that I was gathering in your presence! That is why I didn’t speak with you or raise my head when you approached me.’

“He said to us, ‘If [80b] people knew everything that the blessed Holy One planted in the earth and everything that exists in the world, they would perceive the power of their Lord with great wisdom. But the blessed Holy One has only concealed this wisdom from humans so that they will not stray from His ways and rely on that wisdom, forgetting Him.’[248]

“When I came and told this in the presence of Rabbi Shim’on, he said, ‘Surely he was a wise man! Come and see: There is not a single grass or herb generated in the earth that does not contain immense wisdom and great power in heaven. Come and see from hyssop, for wherever the blessed Holy One seeks to purify a person, he is purified by hyssop. Why? So that the power appointed over it above will be aroused; for when that appointed power is aroused, it eliminates impure spirit and the person is purified. As for you, I say: Blessed be the Compassionate One who saved you!’”[249]

You yourselves saw what I did to Egypt, and I bore you on eagles’ wings [*and brought you to Me*] (Exodus 19:4).

What does this mean: *on eagles’ wings*? Rabbi Yehudah said, “With compassion, as is written: *Like an eagle protecting his nest,* [*hovering over his fledglings, He spread His wings, He took*

him, bearing him on His pinion] (Deuteronomy 32:11).[250] This corresponds to a mystery spoken by Rabbi Shim'on: *the way of an eagle in heaven* (Proverbs 30:19). What is *in heaven*? In Compassion. Just as an eagle feels compassion toward its young and harsh judgment toward others, so the blessed Holy One feels compassion toward Israel and judgment toward other nations."[251]

Rabbi El'azar was going from Cappadocia to Lydda, accompanied by Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Ḥiyya.[252] They rose with the light, as day began to shine, and set out. Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "I have seen this verse that is written: *and on the right the four of them had a lion's face, and on the left the four of them had an ox's face, and the four of them had an eagle's face* (Ezekiel 1:10). Look, *lion* is on the right, *ox* is on the left, *eagle*—where is its place?"[253]

Rabbi El'azar replied, "In the site where Jacob dwells. Why? Because the eagle is imbued with everything—compassion toward its young, judgment toward others. Similarly, the blessed Holy One conducted Israel with compassion, and others with judgment, as is written: *I bore you on eagles' wings* (Exodus 19:4), and similarly: *like an eagle protecting his nest* (Deuteronomy 32:11).

"How do we know that an eagle is called 'compassion'? As is written: *the way of an eagle in heaven* (Proverbs 30:19)—*in heaven,* precisely! Therefore *lion* is on the right, *ox* is on the left, and *eagle* is between them, grasping them. *Human* includes all of them, all combined in him, as is written: *Upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of a human being upon it, above* (Ezekiel 1:26)."[254]

It happened on the third day [*when it became morning, that there were thunderings and*

Rabbi Abba opened, "*We have a little sister, and she has no breasts. What will we do for our sister on the day when*

lightning and a heavy cloud on the mountain and the sound of a shofar, very strong, and all the people who were in the camp trembled] (Exodus 19:16).

she is spoken for? (Song of Songs 8:8).[255] *We have a little sister*—Assembly of Israel, who is called sister of the blessed Holy One.[256]

"*And she has no breasts*—corresponding to what we have learned: When Israel approached Mount Sinai, they possessed no merits or good deeds to protect them, as is written: *and she has no breasts*—for those are a woman's adornment and beauty, and a woman's beauty consists solely of them.[257]

"*What will we do for our sister?*—what will happen to her when the blessed Holy One reveals Himself on Mount Sinai to utter words of Torah and their souls fly away from them?"[258]

Rabbi Yose said, "When Israel approached Mount Sinai, that night until daybreak marked three days that they did not couple conjugally. Supernal angels came and received them in brotherhood—they are angels above and Israel are angels below; they sanctify the supernal Name above and Israel sanctify the supernal Name below. The people of Israel were crowned with seventy crowns on that night, and supernal angels declared, '*We have a little sister, and she has no breasts*—for they have no merits or good deeds. *What will we do for our sister?*—how will we honor her on the day when the blessed Holy One reveals Torah to her?'[259]

"*It happened on the third day* (Exodus 19:16). It is written: *Ready yourselves for three days; do not go near a woman* (ibid. 19:15), corresponding to *on the third day*."[260]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "When the blessed Holy One desired to reveal Himself [81a] on Mount Sinai, He called His whole celestial Family and said to them, 'Now Israel are children who do not know how to conduct themselves, yet I

want to reveal Myself to them.[261] If I do so by the power of *Gevurah* (Might), they will not be able to bear it. Rather, I will reveal Myself to them in *Raḥamei* (Compassion), and they will accept My laws.' As is written: *It happened on the third day—on the third day,* precisely, which is *Raḥamei*! How do we know? As is written: *He bent the heavens and came down* (Psalms 18:10). This is how the blessed Holy One revealed Himself to Israel, first extending them *Raḥamei* and afterward giving them the Torah from the side of *Gevurah*. *On the third day*—befitting them, for on account of this they are called Israel.[262]

"*When it became morning* (Exodus 19:16)—as is written: *morning without clouds* (2 Samuel 23:4). Look, if there had been *clouds,* darkness would have prevailed and *Ḥesed* (Love) would not have been revealed. And when is *Ḥesed* revealed? As is said: *The morning was light* (Genesis 44:3)—for when morning shines, *Ḥesed* appears in the world and judgments disappear. As long as morning does not shine, judgments do not yet disappear, as is written: *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of Elohim shouted for joy* (Job 38:7). As soon as those stars disappear and the heavens shine, of that moment is written *morning without clouds,* and *Ḥesed* arouses in the lower world. Of that moment is written *when it became morning*—once morning aroused, they were not to be found, as implied by *when it became morning*."[263]

Rabbi Yose said, "*When it became morning,* the blessed Holy One began to reveal Himself on Mount Sinai. It has been taught: *When it became* הבקר (*ha-boqer*), *the morning*—when the merit of Abraham was aroused, of whom is written *Abraham rose early in the morning* (Genesis 22:3)."[264]

"*There were thunderings and lightning* (Exodus 19:16). Rabbi Abba said, "It is spelled קלת (*qolot*), *thunderings,* deficiently—two קלין (*qalin*), voices, turning back into one, issuing from one another: air from water, and water from

air. It has been taught: Two that are one; one, an entirety encompassing two."[265]

Rabbi Yose said, "קלת (*Qolot*)—one that is great and mighty, never ceasing. For it has been taught: In four cycles in the year the voice ceases, and then judgments arouse in the world; but this voice, comprising other voices, never ceases and is never deprived of its full existence and potency. This voice is voice of voices, a voice containing other voices."[266]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Voice issues only from the aspect of air and water, and voice generates voice, intermingling, and it is spelled קלת (*qolot*)."[267]

And lightning (Exodus 19:16). Rabbi Yose said, "This corresponds to what is written: *He makes lightning for the rain* (Psalms 135:7)—a flame in diadems, cluster of compassion, in unsubsiding love."[268]

It has been taught: Rabbi Yehudah said, "Torah was given from the side of *Gevurah*."[269]

Rabbi Yose said, "If so, it is on the left side!"[270]

He replied, "It returned to the right, as is written: *From His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2), and it is written: *Your right hand, O YHVH, glorious in power* (Exodus 15:6). We find left turning into right, and right into left; thus *Gevurah* is on the left."[271]

And a heavy cloud on the mountain (Exodus 19:16)—a mighty cloud settling in its place, not moving.[272]

וקל (*Ve-qol*), *And the voice of, a shofar, very strong* (ibid.)—out of this mighty cloud issues that voice, as is said: *when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness* (Deuteronomy 5:20).[273]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "There were three types of darkness, as is written: *darkness, cloud, and dense fog* (Deuteronomy 4:11), and that voice issued as inmost of all."[274]

Rabbi Yose said, "Inmost of all, of which is written *a mighty voice, unceasing* (Deuteronomy 5:19)."[275]

Rabbi Abba said, “It is written: *All the people were seeing* הקולת (*ha-qolot*), *the thunderings* (Exodus 20:15). *Were seeing*—the verse should read *were hearing*. However, we have learned as follows: Those קלין (*qalin*), voices, were engraved in that darkness, cloud, and dense fog, and were visible in them as a body is visible, and they saw what they saw and heard what they heard from within that darkness, dense fog, and cloud. From within the vision that they saw, they were illumined by supernal radiance and knew what later generations coming after them would not know. They all saw face-to-face, as is written: *Face-to-face YHVH spoke* [*with you*]… (Deuteronomy 5:4).”[276]

And what did they see? Rabbi Yose taught, “Radiance of those voices—for there was not a single voice that did not shine radiantly, enabling them to gaze upon all hidden, concealed treasures and all generations that will appear until King Messiah. Therefore, *All the people were seeing* הקולת (*ha-qolot*), *the voices* [81b]—actually seeing!”[277]

Rabbi El’azar said, “*All the people were seeing the voices—seeing,* as we have said: they saw, through the radiance of those voices, what other, later generations would not see.

“את הקולת (*Et ha-qolot*), *The voices*—as is said: *I saw* את יהוה (*et YHVH*), *YHVH* (Isaiah 6:1). It is not written *I saw YHVH,* but rather *et YHVH*. Here too, it is not said *All the people were seeing ha-qolot, the voices,* but rather *et ha-qolot*.[278]

“Similarly, את השמים ואת הארץ (*et ha-shamayim ve-et ha-arets*), *the heavens and the earth* (Genesis 1:1). For each את (*et*) in Torah has been provided to contemplate wisdom: *Honor* אמך ואת אביך (*et avikha ve-et immekha*), *your father and your mother* (Exodus 20:12); *Honor* את יהוה (*et YHVH*), *YHVH, with your wealth* (Proverbs 3:9)—all of them encompassing something else. Here too, *et ha-qolot, the voices*—that which issues from them, through which they saw and contemplated immense wisdom and all the heads of nations and later generations that would come into the world.[279]

“*And the flashes* (Exodus 20:15). At first, *lightning* (ibid. 19:16), and now *flashes*. All is one, but having been arrayed to appear perfectly, they were called so.”[280]

And the voice of the shofar (Exodus 20:15). Rabbi Yitsḥak taught, “It is written: *One thing has God spoken, two have I heard* (Psalms 62:12)—as is said: *I am* [*YHVH your God*] and *You shall have no* [*other gods beside Me*] (Exodus 20:2–3).”[281]

Rabbi Yehudah says, “Why *the voice of the shofar*? Well, the *voice* that is called *shofar,* as is written: *You shall sound a blasting shofar in the seventh month on the tenth of the month, on the Day of Atonement* (Leviticus 25:9)—then *shofar* is born.”[282]

Rabbi Yose said, “Just as a shofar emits voice, air, and water, so too is all included in this, from which other voices issue.”[283]

Rabbi El’azar said, “*Voice* issues from *shofar,* implying that *shofar* is one entity, with *voice* issuing from it and *shofar* maintaining its existence; therefore it is written: *the voice of the shofar*.”[284]

Rabbi Yehudah said as follows: “*The voice of the shofar* —spelled השפר (*ha-shofar*), *the shofar,* deficiently, as is said: שפר (*Shefar*), *It pleased, Darius* (Daniel 6:2); *May my advice* ישפר (*yishpar*), *be pleasing, to you* (ibid. 4:24); שפר (*Shefar*), *It is pleasing, to me to recount* (ibid. 3:32).”[285]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “*The voice of the shofar*—the place from which the voice issues is called *shofar*.”[286]

Rabbi Shim’on said further, “Come and see: *the voice of the shofar*—corresponding to what is written: *but on everything emanating from YHVH’s mouth does the human live* (Deuteronomy 8:3). What is *emanating from YHVH’s mouth*? *The voice of the shofar*—greater than all of them, more powerful than all of them, as is written: *the voice of a shofar, very strong* (Exodus 19:16), which is said of no other voice.”[287]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Upon this *voice of the shofar* depends all. It is written: *a mighty voice* (Deuteronomy 5:19); *a voice of sheer silence* (1 Kings 19:12)—with radiance more subtle and lucid than all."[288]

Silence (1 Kings 19:12). What does *silence* mean? Rabbi Shim'on said, "That one must be silent about it and muzzle one's mouth, as is said: *I said, 'I will guard my ways from sinning with my tongue; I will guard my mouth with a muzzle'* (Psalms 39:2)."[289]

And the people saw and trembled (Exodus 20:15)—for they saw what they saw. וינועו (*Va-yanu'u*), *And trembled*—as is said: *The pivots of the threshold* ינועו (*yanu'u*), *trembled, at the sound of the one who called* (Isaiah 6:4).[290]

It has been taught: What is written of Ezekiel, when he saw the mighty ways of the blessed Holy One? As is written: *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming* [*from the north, a great cloud and flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it; and from within it, like the color of amber, from within the fire*] (Ezekiel 1:4). Why *a stormy wind?*[291]

Rabbi Yose said, "To shatter the four kingdoms."[292]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "The mighty wind aroused by decrees of *Gevurah* above.[293]

"*Coming from the north* (Ezekiel 1:4). It is not written *coming from north,* but rather *coming from the north*—the one well-known above, the one concealed and hidden above.[294]

"*A great cloud and flashing fire* (ibid.)—joined to it, yet not joined; gripping its sides to arouse Judgment. For we have learned: Three times a day that harsh Judgment sucks on carved groat cakes from the side of *Gevurah*—as is written: *and flashing fire*—to arouse in worlds.[295]

"And what sweetens it? That of which is written *a radiance surrounding it* (Ezekiel 1:4)—that splendor encircling it on all sides sweetens and refines it, so that it

will not be harsh Judgment and inhabitants of the world can bear it.[296]

“*And from within it, like the color of amber* (ibid.). *And from within it*—from inside. *Like the color of* החשמל (*ha-ḥashmal*), *amber.* What is *ḥashmal*?”

Rabbi Yehudah said in the name of Rabbi Ḥiyya, “ממללות חיות אש (*Ḥayyot esh memallelot*), Fiery beings speaking.”[297]

It has been taught: Rabbi Yose said, “*Ḥashmal*—heart of fire, as is written: *from within the fire* (Ezekiel 1:4), for it is inside the fire. *Ḥashmal*—after four rungs, as is written: *a stormy wind, a great cloud and flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it;* [82a] *and from within it, like the color of ḥashmal, from within the fire* (ibid.)—that of which is written *and flashing fire*.”[298]

It has been taught: Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Yehudah said, “Here Israel saw what Ezekiel did not see, all of them grasping supernal, precious wisdom. Five rungs of voices Israel saw on Mount Sinai, and by these five rungs was Torah transmitted. Of the fifth rung is written *voice of the shofar* (Exodus 20:15). Correspondingly, Ezekiel saw five rungs outside of these, namely, *a stormy wind, a great cloud, and flashing fire, a radiance surrounding it, the color of ḥashmal* (Ezekiel 1:4).”[299]

Rabbi El’azar said, “Of Israel is written *Face-to-face YHVH spoke with you on the mountain* (Deuteronomy 5:4). Of Ezekiel is written *like the appearance* and *image* (Ezekiel 1:4–5)—like someone looking from behind many walls, like a person peering from behind a wall.”[300]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “What Israel saw, no other prophet saw; all the more so, what Moses saw, no other prophet saw—all the more so, no other human. Happy is his share, for of him is written *He was there with YHVH* (Exodus 34:28)—and not through some other vision, as is written: *in a vision, not in riddles* (Numbers 12:8).”[301]

Rabbi Yose said, “Come and see! היה היה (*Hayoh hayah*), *Happening it happened* [*that the word of YHVH came to Ezekiel son of Buzi*] (Ezekiel 1:3)—a prophecy happening momentarily.”[302]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Coming for sustenance, being essential for the sake of Israel—to demonstrate that the blessed Holy One had not abandoned them and that wherever Israel is scattered, He dwells with them.”[303]

Rabbi El’azar said, “*Hayoh hayah*, *Happening it happened*—for he saw and did not see, comprehended those matters and did not. But of Israel what is written? *All the people were seeing the voices* (Exodus 20:15)—every single one saw fittingly. For it has been taught: They all stood row after row, area by area, each one seeing fittingly.”[304]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “Chiefs of the people by themselves, chiefs of the tribes by themselves, females by themselves. Five rungs to the right and five rungs to the left, as is written: *You are standing today, all of you, before YHVH your God, your heads, your tribes, your elders, and your officers, every man of Israel* (Deuteronomy 29:9)—look, five rungs to the right. *Your little ones, your wives, and your sojourner who is in the midst of your camps, from the hewer of your wood to the drawer of your water* (ibid., 10)—look, five to the left. All arrayed according to the pattern above. Correspondingly, Israel inherited an eternal possession: the Ten Utterances, on which depend all commandments, all merits, and all inherited legacy—the fine share of Israel.[305]

“It has been taught: When the blessed Holy One revealed Himself on Mount Sinai, all of Israel saw as one sees light in a glass lantern, and by that light each one saw what the prophet Ezekiel did not see. How so? Because those supernal voices were revealed as one, as is written: *All the people were seeing* את הקולת (*et ha-qolot*), *the voices* (Exodus 20:15). Whereas to Ezekiel, *Shekhinah* was revealed with Her chariots, but nothing more, and he saw like someone looking from behind many walls.”[306]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Happy is the generation of whom is written *YHVH came down before the eyes of all the people on Mount Sinai* (Exodus 19:11). Come and see! It is written:

From His right hand, a fiery law for them (Deuteronomy 33:2)—from the right was revealed what was revealed. What is the difference between this and that?”[307]

Rabbi Yose replied, “Here, at Sinai, head and body of the King, as is written: *He bent the heavens and came down* (Psalms 18:10), and where there is head, there is body. But of Ezekiel is written *and there the hand of YHVH came upon him* (Ezekiel 1:3)—for the hand was revealed and not the body. And even concerning the hand we have learned: upper *hand of YHVH,* lower *hand of YHVH*.[308]

“Come and see: *The heavens opened and I saw* מראות (*mar’ot*), *visions of, Elohim* (Ezekiel 1:1)—spelled מראת (*mar’at*), *a vision of,* to indicate that he was referring to *Shekhinah*. For look: *I saw mar’at,* spelled deficiently—a single *vision*!”[309]

Rabbi Yeisa asked, “But is *Shekhinah* not everything?”[310]

Rabbi Yose replied, “Head of the King does not compare to feet of the King, although all is in body of the King.[311]

“Come and see: Of Isaiah is written *I saw* את יהוה (*et YHVH*), *YHVH* (Isaiah 6:1). Of Ezekiel is written *I saw visions of Elohim*. Here, *et*; there, מראת (*mar’at*), *a vision of*. What this one saw, that one saw. Happy is the share of Moses, for there has never been a perfectly faithful prophet like him! *I saw et YHVH—et*, precisely! *I saw mar’at Elohim, a vision of Elohim—mar’at,* precisely! They occupied a single rung. If [82b] so, then why didn’t Isaiah express as much?”[312]

Rabbi Yose said, “One spoke in general, the other in detail. Why did Ezekiel express so much? All was essential for the sake of Israel, so that they would know the love that the blessed Holy One felt toward them, for His *Shekhinah* and Her chariots were coming to dwell with them in exile.”[313]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “[*The word of YHVH came to Ezekiel…*] *in the land of the Chaldeans* (Ezekiel 1:3). But look at what is written: *Behold the land of the Chaldeans, this people that does not exist!* (Isaiah 23:13). Why did *Shekhinah* reveal Herself there? Now, if you say, ‘For the sake of Israel’—well, it would have been better for *Shekhinah* to dwell in their midst

and not reveal Herself. Rather, it has been taught as follows: If She had not revealed Herself, they would not have known.[314] And as for Her being revealed, what is written? *By the River Kevar* (Ezekiel 1:3)—by water, in a place that cannot be defiled, where impurity does not dwell. That river was one of the four rivers issuing from the Garden of Eden, as is written: *by the River Kevar*. What is כבר (*kevar*), *Kevar*? That *kevar,* already, existed—from a place upon which *Shekhinah* rested. And it is written: *There the hand of YHVH came upon him* (ibid.)—there and nowhere else."[315]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "It is written: *From within it, an image of four living beings, and this was their appearance: they had the image of a human* (Ezekiel 1:5). It has been taught in supernal mystery: There are four living beings deep within the holy palace—primordial, ancient, from the Holy Ancient One, totality of the Holy Name. Ezekiel saw *an image* of supernal chariots, for he saw from a place that does not shine so brightly.[316]

"It has been taught: As above, so below them, and so in all worlds, all linked with one another.[317] Now, if you say that he saw further above—well, we have learned: Moses saw through an *ispaqlarya* that shines, while all the prophets saw only through an *ispaqlarya* that does not shine, as is written: *I saw* מראת (*mar'ot*), *visions of, Elohim* (Ezekiel 1:1), and it is written: *If there be among you a prophet of YHVH, in a vision I make Myself known to him.... Not so My servant Moses.... Mouth to mouth I speak with him* (Numbers 12:6–8)."[318]

Rabbi Yose said, "Come and see that compared to him all the prophets are like females compared to a male, as is written: *Mouth to mouth I speak with him,* וּמַרְאֶה (*u-mar'eh*), *in a vision*; whereas to other prophets: *YHVH,* בַּמַּרְאָה (*ba-mar'ah*), *in a vision, I make Myself known to him—ba-mar'ah,* and not *mar'eh*.[319] All the more so, Ezekiel, of whom even *mar'ah* is not written, but rather מראת (*mar'ot*), spelled deficiently. All the

more so, since of Moses is written *not in riddles* (Numbers 12:8), rather each thing clearly. Happy is the generation in whose midst this prophet dwelled!”[320]

Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Yehudah said, “Face-to-face Israel saw the radiant glory of their King, and among them were neither blind nor lame nor crippled. Blind, as implied by what is written: *All the people were seeing* (Exodus 20:15). Lame, as is written: *They stood at the foot of the mountain* (ibid. 19:17). Crippled, as is written: *We will do and we will heed* (ibid. 24:7). And of the time to come is written: *Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy* (Isaiah 35:6).”[321]

God spoke all these words, saying (Exodus 20:1).[322] Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, “*Who can utter the mighty acts of* YHVH *or declare all His praise?* (Psalms 106:2). In how many ways does Torah admonish a person not to sin before his Lord! In how many ways does it advise him not to stray from its ways, to the right or to the left! In how many ways does it advise him how to return to the presence of his Lord and be forgiven!

“For we have learned: Torah has given 613 types of advice to a person in order for him to be complete with his Lord,[323] for his Lord wants to benefit him in this world and in the world that is coming—especially in the world that is coming, for we have learned: Whatever reward the blessed Holy One grants to a person is paid from those benefits that he has earned in the world that is coming. Why? Because the world that is coming belongs to the blessed Holy One.[324]

“Now, if you say that this world is not His—well, we have learned as follows: This world, compared to the world that is coming, is nothing but a vestibule of a stairway leading to a banquet hall.[325] Thus, the world that is coming belongs to the blessed Holy One, and when that virtuous one attains,

he attains what is His. For it has been taught: *Therefore Levi has had no portion and inheritance* [*with his brothers*]. Why? Because *YHVH is his inheritance* (Deuteronomy 10:9).[326] Happy is the share of one who merits this supernal inheritance! He merits this world and the house of this world; similarly, in the world that is coming and the holy house, as is written: *I will give them, in My house and within My walls, a monument and a name* (Isaiah 56:5)—all the more so! [83a] Happy is the share of one who dwells with the King in His house!"[327]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Happy is the share of the righteous one who attains what is written: *Then you will delight by* על (*al*), *upon, YHVH* (Isaiah 58:14). It is not written עם (*im*), *with, YHVH,* but rather *al, above, YHVH*. What is *above YHVH*? A place from which above and below are drawn, and toward which they yearn, as is written: מאין (*Me-ayin*), *From nothingness, comes my help* (Psalms 121:1). And similarly: *He reached the Ancient of Days and was brought before Him* (Daniel 7:13). Desire and delight—to gaze upon that splendor of splendor whence issue and stream all those crowns."[328]

Rabbi Shim'on said further, "Concerning this verse—*Then you will delight upon YHVH*—we have learned: What is written subsequently? *And I will cause you to ride* על (*al*), *upon, the heights of the earth* (Isaiah 58:14)—*al, above,* that place called *earth* on high, and that place called *al, above, earth,* is the same as heaven, corresponding to what is written: *above YHVH*."[329]

Rabbi Abba said, "It is not written *then you will dwell,* but rather *then you will delight above YHVH*—namely, heaven, as is written: *Be exalted above heaven, Elohim!* (Psalms 57:12).[330] *And I will cause you to ride above the heights of the earth*—namely, earth of the living. *Above the heights*—implying inclusively Zion and Jerusalem, who are called *heights,* namely, heaven above and earth above. As for the word spoken by Rabbi Shim'on, so it is, and all is

one, as is written: *He reached the Ancient of Days*… (Daniel 7:13). All these words ascend to a single place."[331]

Rabbi Abba said to Rabbi Shim'on, "May my Master expound this verse entirely and how we establish it: *Then you will delight upon YHVH, and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth, and feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob* (Isaiah 58:14)."[332]

He replied, "All has been said, for delight and bliss are על (*al*), *above, YHVH,* for it is written: *until the Ancient of Days* (Daniel 7:13). *Al, above, the heights of the earth*—as has been said.[333]

"*And feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob*—as is written: *May God give you of the dew of heaven* (Genesis 27:28), this being *the inheritance of Jacob*. The blessing that Isaac bestowed upon Jacob alluded to this *heaven,* and he endowed him with the blessing that Jacob's descendants would one day be revived by that dew, as is written: *May God give you—you* and no one else! *Of the dew of heaven*—by which the dead are destined to be revived in the time to come, issuing from the Ancient One to the Short-Tempered One and settling in this *heaven*."[334]

Rabbi Abba contemplated, and said, "Now all has been heard! Thus, Isaac's blessing is more sublime than I had thought!"[335]

It has been taught: *Who can utter the mighty acts of YHVH?* (Psalms 106:2). Why ימלל (*yemallel*), *can utter*? The verse should read ידבר (*yedabber*), *can speak*.

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "As is said: *You may pluck* מלילות (*melilot*), *ears, with your hand* (Deuteronomy 23:26). גבורות (*Gevurot*), *Mighty acts of, YHVH*—for they are numerous, issuing from one *Gevurah*."[336]

And it has been taught: One supernal *Gevurah,* crown of crowns, crowned, from which emerge fifty gates—some to the right and some to the left, each one called *Gevurah,* each

one adorned in an embroidered, radiant tunic, all called *gevurot, mighty acts of, YHVH*.[337]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "גבורת (*Gevurot*), *Mighty acts of, YHVH*—spelled deficiently, for all of them are included in this.[338]

"*Or declare all His praise?* (Psalms 106:2)—*Shekhinah*, radiant glory of the blessed Holy One, as is written: *His praise fills the earth* (Habakkuk 3:3)."[339]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "It is written: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads. The name of the first is Pishon…* (Genesis 2:10–11). Look, these are called by name, and these four flow from that river that issues. What is its name? Its name is יובל (*Yuval*), as is written: *spreading its roots by yuval, a stream… and it does not cease yielding fruit* (Jeremiah 17:8). Why does it *not cease*? Because it spreads *its roots by yuval*. Of this is written *like a spring whose waters do not fail* (Isaiah 58:11). Therefore it is written: [*A river*] *issues* (Genesis 2:10)—*issues* unceasingly."[340]

It has been taught: Rabbi Shim'on said, "It is written: *God spoke* (Exodus 20:1). *Spoke*—to proclaim words. For it has been taught: When the blessed Holy One revealed Himself and began to speak, those above and below trembled and the souls of Israel departed. And it has been taught: That word flew from above to below, was engraved in the four winds of the world, then ascended and descended. Ascending, it was absorbed by mountains of pure balsam [83b] and infused with that dew from above. Then it circled around Israel, restoring their souls, then circled and engraved itself in its place on the tablets of stone. And so it was with every single word."[341]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Every word was filled with all those meanings, with all those elements, decrees, rewards and punishments, mysteries and secrets—like a treasure ship filled with everything.[342] When a word issued, it seemed to be one; but as it was engraved in its place,

seventy branches appeared in that word, rising within it, and fifty crowns minus one on this side and fifty minus one on that side—like a hammer striking a rock, as is said: *like a hammer shattering rock* (Jeremiah 23:29).[343] Israel saw eye-to-eye and rejoiced; and all later generations were present there, all of them receiving the Torah on Mount Sinai, as is written: *but with whoever is here standing with us today and with whoever is not here with us today* (Deuteronomy 29:14)—all of them, every single one fittingly, all of them seeing and receiving the words.[344]

"אלהים (*Elohim*), *God* (Exodus 20:1)—*Gevurah*.[345]

"את (*Et*) (ibid.)—merging with the right, as we have learned: את השמים (*et ha-shamayim*), *the heavens,* which is the right; ואת הארץ (*ve-et ha-arets*), *and the earth* (Genesis 1:1), which is the left. As is written: *My own hand founded earth, and My right hand spread out heaven* (Isaiah 48:13); *My own hand—et*.[346]

"*All* (Exodus 20:1)—encompassing other crowns.[347]

"*Words* (ibid.)—linked with one another.

"*These* (ibid.)—all those meanings, all those mysteries, all those secrets, rewards, and punishments.[348]

"*Saying* (ibid.)—to be a heritage for all, as is written: *Torah did Moses command us, a heritage for the assembly of Jacob* (Deuteronomy 33:4).[349]

"Now, you might say, 'To reveal what must not be revealed to everyone.' Well, it is written: *I am YHVH your God* (Exodus 20:2)—'just as I am hidden and concealed, so should these words be hidden and concealed in your heart.'[350]

"Alternatively, אלהים (*Elohim*), *God, spoke*—one. האלה לאמר את כל הדברים (*Et kol ha-devarim ha-elleh lemor*), *All these words, saying*—look, five others."[351]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "אלהים (*Elohim*), *God, spoke—Gevurah*. את (*Et*)—the right. *All*—this and that."[352]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "*All*—including Abraham, as is written: *YHVH blessed Abraham with all* (Genesis 24:1).[353]

“*Words*—including other, covered crowns.[354]

“*These*—those that are revealed, as is written: *All the people were seeing the voices* (Exodus 20:15).[355]

“*Saying*—corresponding to what is written: *A capable wife is her husband’s crown* (Proverbs 12:4), and *Saying, If a man divorces his wife* (Jeremiah 3:1).”[356]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “Why was Torah given in fire and darkness, as is written: *The mountain was burning with fire to the heart of the heavens—darkness, cloud, and dense fog* (Deuteronomy 4:11)? Because whoever engages in Torah is saved from another fire and from the darkness with which other nations blacken Israel. For by the merit of Abraham, Israel has been saved from the fire of Hell, as we have learned: The blessed Holy One said to Abraham, As long as your children engage in Torah, they will be saved from these; but if not, here is the fire of Hell that will have dominion over them, and they will be subjugated among the nations.’

“He [Abraham] said to Him, ‘With two knots, words are not erected! Rather, if it pleases You, let them be saved from the fire of Hell and be subjugated among the nations until they return to You.’

“He replied, ‘That is certainly fine!’ As is written: *unless their Rock had sold them* (Deuteronomy 32:30). Who is *their Rock*? Abraham, for it is written: *Look to the rock from which you were hewn* (Isaiah 51:1). *And YHVH had given them up* (Deuteronomy, ibid.)—the blessed Holy One, who agreed with him.”[357]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “From the day that Israel went out of Egypt until the day that Torah was given, fifty days elapsed. Why?” Rabbi Yehudah said, “Because of those years of Jubilee, as is written: *You shall hallow the fiftieth year* (Leviticus 25:10).”

It has been taught: Rabbi Shim’on said, “That Jubilee brought Israel out of Egypt. Now, if you say, ‘Jubilee Herself’—rather, it was from the aspect of Jubilee: from the

aspect of Jubilee, Judgment aroused upon the Egyptians. Therefore, these fifty days were of Jubilee."[358]

It has been taught: Correspondingly, the judgments against Egypt and all those praises are mentioned fifty times in the Torah: *who* [84a] *has brought you out* [*of the land of Egypt*] (Exodus 20:2); *He brought you out* (Deuteronomy 4:37); *for with a strong hand He brought you out* (Exodus 13:9). All those times amount to fifty, and no more, since all is adorned with Jubilee, and from the aspect of Jubilee comes all.[359] Therefore, Torah, which comes in *Gevurah,* is adorned with the right, as is written: *From His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2).[360]

It has been taught: There were five voices—and all of them appeared in them, blending with them, adorned with this."[361]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "When Israel received the Torah, this Jubilee crowned the blessed Holy One with its crowns, like a king who is crowned amidst his army, as is written: *O daughters of Zion, come out and gaze upon King Solomon, upon the crown with which his mother crowned him* (Song of Songs 3:11). Who is *his mother*? This is Jubilee. And Jubilee was crowned with joy and perfection, as is written: *a joyous mother of children* (Psalms 113:9)."

Who is *a joyous mother of children*? Rabbi Shim'on said, "This is Jubilee."[362]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Of this is written *Your father and mother will rejoice…* (Proverbs 23:25)."[363]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "As the Companions have established, for it is written: *Your father's nakedness and your mother's nakedness you shall not expose* (Leviticus 18:7). Woe to one who exposes their nakedness!"[364]

It has been taught: Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "When the blessed Holy One revealed Himself on Mount Sinai, the mountain trembled. And when Sinai trembled, all the other mountains of the world trembled, rising and falling until the blessed Holy One stretched out His hand upon them and

they were calmed. A voice issued, proclaiming: *What troubles you, O sea, that you flee? O mountains, that you leap like rams?* (Psalms 114:5–6). And they responded, *At the presence of the Lord, tremble, O earth* (ibid., 7)."[365]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "*At the presence of the Lord, tremble, O earth*—Mother, as is written: *a joyous mother of children* (Psalms 113:9). *At the presence of the God of Jacob*—the one of whom is written *My son, My firstborn, is Israel* (Exodus 4:22). Concerning this is written *upon the crown with which his mother crowned him* (Song of Songs 3:11)."[366]

What is בעטרה (*ba-atarah*), *upon the crown*? Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "As is written: *Saul and his men* עוטרים (*oterim*), *were encircling, David* (1 Samuel 23:26)—for He is crowned with white, red, green, and all colors, all included in Him, encircling Him."[367]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "What is *the crown*? As is written: *Israel, in whom I glory* (Isaiah 49:3), and similarly: *I will glorify My glorious house* (ibid. 60:7)."[368]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "The Torah was given in black fire upon white fire, to include right in left—and left turning into right, as is written: *From His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2)."[369]

Rabbi Abba said, "When the smoke of Sinai issued, that smoke ascended enwreathed like a cluster of grapes, rising and falling, wafting all fragrant aromas of the Garden of Eden, in a display of white, black, and red, as is written: *perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant* (Song of Songs 3:6)."[370]

That smoke, who was it? Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "*Shekhinah*, appearing there, as is written: *Who is* זאת (*zot*), *this, rising from the wilderness like columns of smoke?* (ibid.)."[371]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Why do you need all this? Look, there is an explicit verse: *Mount Sinai was all in smoke because YHVH had descended upon it in fire, and its smoke*

rose like the smoke of a kiln (Exodus 19:18). Happy is the nation who saw this and knew this!”[372]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “When letters were engraved on the tablets of stone, they were visible on both sides, from one side and from the other. The tablets were of sapphire, engraved and covered with white fire, and the letters were of black fire, engraved on both sides, from one side and from the other.”[373]

Rabbi Abba said, “The tablets were in their natural form, and the letters flew and became visible in two flames: white fire and black fire, appearing as one, right and left, as is written: *Length of days in her right hand; in her left* [*riches and honor*] (Proverbs 3:16). But it is written: *From His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2)! Well, it issued from the side of *Gevurah* and was included in the right; thus, white fire and black fire.”[374]

It has been taught: It is written, *And the tablets, God’s work they were* (Exodus 32:16). Rabbi Yehudah said, “והלחת (*Ve-ha-luḥot*), *and the tablets*—one: they were two and appeared as one. Ten utterances were engraved upon them, five included in five, so that all would be on the right—*the work of God,* surely!”[375]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “They were of sapphire [84b] and there were two, and the stones were rough-hewn. The blessed Holy One blew upon them with a wind and they were smoothened and carved into two tablets.”

Rabbi Yehudah said, “They resembled sapphire, as implied by what is written: *God’s work they were* (Exodus 32:16).”[376]

He said to him, “If so, then sapphire—a stone more precious than any other—is not the work of the blessed Holy One!”[377]

He replied, “How do we establish *God’s work they were*? *They were*—precisely!”[378]

He said to him, “Come and see: It is written: *The tablets, God’s work they were*—it is written *the tablets,* not

the stones!”[379]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “It is all! But these two tablets existed before the world was created and were stored away since the eve of Sabbath, and they were formed by the blessed Holy One—His handiwork.[380]

“From what were they formed? It has been taught: from that supernal dew flowing from the Holy Ancient One. When it flowed and emanated to the Holy Apple Orchard, the blessed Holy One took two frosty drops, and they congealed, turning into two precious stones. He blew on them and they were smoothened into two tablets, as is written: *God’s work they were*.[381]

“*And the writing, God’s writing it was* (Exodus 32:16)—as is written: *written by the finger of God* (ibid. 31:18). It has been taught: *The finger of God*—that finger amounts to ten, as is said: *It is the finger of God!* (ibid. 8:15). Every single finger amounts to ten until becoming a complete hand, as is written: *Israel saw the great hand* (ibid. 14:31).”[382]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “*Engraved upon the tablets* (Exodus 32:16)—the stones were pierced, visible from both sides. *Engraved*—engraving of engraving.”[383]

Rabbi Abba said, “From one side, the other side was visible; from here could be read what was written on the other side.”[384]

Rabbi El’azar said, “They were inscribed miraculously, so that all people testified that *God’s writing it was* (Exodus 32:16), surely! For none of the inhabitants of the world could comprehend them as they were. As for those who say that they were pierced, is it written *engraved in the tablets*? Rather, it is written *upon the tablets* (Exodus 32:16). However, it has been taught as follows: Five voices are on the right and five on the left; those of the left are included in the right, and from the right can be seen those of the left. Here, all is right, these contained in those. Whoever was on this side saw the other side and read those

letters. We have learned: Left turned into right, as is written: *From His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2). Therefore, *God's writing it was,* surely!

"How so? Whoever was on this side would read *I am* YHVH *your God* (Exodus 20:2), and from these letters he could see and read *You shall not murder* (ibid., 13). He would read *You shall have no other gods* [*beside Me*] (ibid., 3), and he could see and read *You shall not commit adultery* (ibid., 13). He would read *You shall not take the name of* YHVH *your God* [*in vain*] (ibid., 7), and he could see and read *You shall not steal* (ibid., 13). And so with all of them, all from this side, and similarly from the other side, all interwoven in this pattern—as is written: *God's writing,* surely!"[385]

Moses went down to the people and said to them (Exodus 19:25)—and it is not written what he said![386]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "Come and see: According to the way of the world, when joy comes to a person or when sorrow comes, and he does not comprehend, he cannot bear it—his heart momentarily flies away. But once he comprehends, he endures steadfastly and can bear it. All the more so here, for look, Moses told them everything that would happen afterward, fortifying their hearts with words—and yet they could not endure. All the more so, if he had not told them anything! Therefore, *he said to them* (Exodus 19:25), at first, strengthening their hearts, and afterward: *God spoke* (ibid. 20:1).[387] Despite all this, they could not endure; for we have learned that Rabbi Yehudah said in the name of Rabbi Ḥiyya, in the name of Rabbi Yose: When they heard the word of the blessed Holy One, the souls of Israel flew away, ascending to His Throne of Glory to cling there. Torah said before the blessed Holy One, 'Was it for nothing that I existed two thousand years before the world was created? Is it for nothing that I contain *Any* [85a] *man of*

the Children of Israel (Leviticus 20:2); *To the Children of Israel you shall speak* (Exodus 30:31); *For Mine are the Children of Israel as servants* (Leviticus 25:55)? Where are the Children of Israel?!'

"At that moment, Torah returned the soul of each and every Israelite—seizing and grasping their souls to return them to Israel, as is written: *Torah of YHVH is perfect, restoring the soul* (Psalms 19:8)—*restoring the soul,* literally!"[388]

It has been taught: It is written: *Solomon sat upon the throne of YHVH as king* (1 Chronicles 29:23)—as is written: *The throne had six steps* (1 Kings 10:19).[389] Rabbi Abba said, "For the moon assumed fullness, as we have learned: In the days of Solomon the moon waxed full. When did it become full? When it attained fifteen, as we have learned: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Perez, Hezron, Ram, Amminadab, Nahshon, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, Jesse, David, Solomon. Once Solomon appeared, the moon waxed full, as is written: *Solomon sat upon the throne of YHVH as king*.[390]

"In the days of Zedekiah, the moon became deficient, as is said: *The moon will not shed its light* (Isaiah 13:10). We have learned: In the days of Zedekiah, the moon waned away and the faces of Israel darkened. Go and enumerate: Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Zedekiah. When Zedekiah appeared, the moon waned away and became deficient, as is written: *He blinded the eyes of Zedekiah* (Jeremiah 52:11). At that time, *He cast down earth from heaven* (Lamentations 2:1)—She was removed far from *heaven,* and this *earth* was darkened; that is, the moon had become deficient."[391]

It has been taught: When Israel stood at Mount Sinai, [the moon] began to shine, as is written: *He bent the heavens and came down* (Psalms 18:10). What does this mean: *came down*? That the sun approached the moon, and

the moon began to shine, as is written: *the banner of the camp of Judah to the east* (Numbers 2:3). At Mount Sinai, Judah was appointed royal official in the kingdom, as is written: *Judah still rules with* אל (*El*), *God, and is faithful to the holy* (Hosea 12:1). What does this mean: ונאמן (*ve-ne'eman*), *and is faithful, to the holy*? When the blessed Holy One said to Israel, *As for you, you will be for Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation* (Exodus 19:6), Judah was found *ne'eman*, trustworthy, to receive kingship, and the moon began to shine.[392]

I am YHVH your God (Exodus 20:2).[393] Rabbi El'azar opened, "*Heed, my son, the instruction of your father*—the blessed Holy One. *And do not forsake the Torah of your mother* (Proverbs 1:8)—Assembly of Israel."[394]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "*The instruction of your father*—*Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom). *And do not forsake the Torah of your mother*—*Binah* (Understanding)."[395]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "This and that are one, for we have learned: Torah issued from primordial *Ḥokhmah*."[396]

Rabbi Yose said, "It issued from *Binah*, as is written: *to discern words of* בינה (*vinah*), *understanding* (Proverbs 1:2), and similarly: *Do not forsake the Torah of your mother.*"

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Torah comprises *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, as is written: *Heed, my son, the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the Torah of your mother.*"

Rabbi Abba said, "Comprising all! Since it comprises these two, it comprises all: Love, Judgment, Compassion—all essential perfection. If the King and *Matronita* concur, all concur; where these appear, all appear."[397]

Rabbi Yose said, "*I am YHVH your God* (Exodus 20:2). *I*—*Shekhinah*, as is written: *I Myself will go down with you to Egypt* (Genesis 46:4).[398]

"*YHVH your God*—Assembly of Israel, as is written: *Do not forsake the Torah of your mother*."[399]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "*I am*—*Shekhinah*, interrupted by an accent, as is said: *I am; Esau is your firstborn* (Genesis 27:19).[400]

"*YHVH your God*—as is written: *From heaven He had you hear His voice* (Deuteronomy 4:36), and similarly: *You yourselves saw that from heaven I spoke with you* (Exodus 20:19)—*from heaven*, really, the blessed Holy One![401]

"אשר (*Asher*), *Who* (ibid. 20:2)—a place that all מאשרין (*me'ashsherin*), praise.[402] [85b]

"*Brought you out of the land of Egypt* (ibid.)—Jubilee, as has been taught: From the aspect of Jubilee, Israel went out of Egypt. Therefore, the Exodus from Egypt is mentioned fifty times in the Torah; fifty days to receive the Torah; fifty years for liberation of slaves.[403]

"*Out of a house of slaves* (ibid.)—as is written: *He struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt* (ibid. 12:29), and we have learned: These are low crowns, in which the Egyptians trusted. As there is a house above, there is a house below: a holy house above, as is written: *By wisdom a house is built* (Proverbs 24:3); a low house below, unholy, as is written: *out of a house of slaves*."[404]

It has been taught: When *I* (Exodus 20:2) was uttered, all the commandments of Torah linked to this side were included in this word.[405] As we have learned: All the commandments of Torah are connected with the body of the King—some with the head of the King, some with the trunk of the body, some with the hands of the King, some with His feet, and none leaves the body of the King.[406]

Therefore, whoever transgresses the commandments of Torah is like one who transgresses against the body of the King, as is written: *They will go out and stare at the corpses of the people who transgress against Me* (Isaiah 66:24)—*against Me,* literally! Woe to the wicked who violate the

words of Torah and do not realize what they do! For Rabbi Shim'on said, "The place against which he sinned, that very place exposes his sin. If he sinned against the blessed Holy One, the blessed Holy One exposes his sin, as is written: *Heaven will expose his sin, and earth will rise up against him* (Job 20:27)."[407]

It has been taught: *Heaven* exposes a person's sin; and when it exposes his sin, *earth* executes judgment upon the person, as is written: *and earth will rise up against him*—punishing him.[408]

Rabbi Yose said, "We have learned: Mother and children were in a state of perfection, as is written: *a joyous mother of children* (Psalms 113:9)."[409]

"*I* (Exodus 20:2)—as we have learned: Abraham had a daughter, namely, *Shekhinah*; this is Daughter.[410]

"*YHVH your God* (ibid.)—as is written: *My son, My firstborn, is Israel* (Exodus 4:22), and: *It is a tree of life to those who grasp it* (Proverbs 3:18); here, Son.[411]

"*Who brought you out of the land of Egypt* (Exodus 20:2)—as is written: *She is a jubilee; she shall be holy for you* (Leviticus 25:12), and similarly: *a joyous mother of children* (Psalms 113:9); *You shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim a release* (Leviticus 25:10)—here, Mother and Children.[412] If Mother is sitting, Children are sitting, and all worlds are fulfilled. If Mother is removed, they are all removed from their places, and it is written: *Do not take the mother above the children* (Deuteronomy 22:6), and we have learned: A person should not commit sins below, since thereby Mother is removed from Children."[413]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "All is the blessed Holy One, all is He, all is one! These words have been revealed to Reapers of the Field. Happy are they in this world and in the world that is coming!"[414]

It has been taught: Rabbi El'azar said, "It is written: *In the beginning Elohim created heaven and earth* (Genesis 1:1),

and it is written: *on the day that YHVH Elohim made earth and heaven* (ibid. 2:4). How can we establish these verses? Well, we have learned that both were created as one, indicating that the blessed Holy One stretched out His right line and created *heaven,* and stretched out His left line and created *earth*. First, *heaven and earth;* then, *earth and heaven*."[415]

It has been taught: *On that day, I will respond—declares YHVH—I will respond to heaven, and it will respond to earth* (Hosea 2:23). *I will respond to heaven—heaven*, really, as is written: *Heaven is My throne* (Isaiah 66:1)! *And it will respond to earth—earth*, really, as is written: *and earth is My footstool* (ibid.)! *Heaven*—supernal Heaven; *earth*—supernal Earth.[416]

It has been taught: When this heaven is arrayed in its finery, He is arrayed facing this earth, His desire toward Her through a single rung called Righteous One, as is written: *The righteous one is the foundation of the world* (Proverbs 10:25), and He clings to this earth.[417]

From the head of the King to that place where this Righteous One dwells, flows one holy river [86a] of anointing oil, pouring with immense desire into this holy earth, who absorbs all. Afterward, from this earth all are nourished, above and below. Like a male, desiring to cling to a female, and emitting seed of anointing from the top of the brain into the phallus, pouring into the female, who thereby conceives. Thus, all smooth members of the body join the female, and female embraces all.[418]

Corresponding to this paradigm, we have learned: Whoever completes the first ten in the synagogue receives the reward of them all. Rabbi Yose said, "Equal to that of them all."[419]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "It is written: *He bent the heavens and came down* (Psalms 18:10), and it is written: *YHVH came down* על (*al*), *upon, Mount Sinai* (Exodus 19:20). It has been taught: *He bent the heavens and came down*. Where did He

come down? If you say that He came down to Sinai, it is written על הר סיני (*al har sinai*), *above Mount Sinai,* and not סיני בהר (*be-har sinai*), *on Mount Sinai*. So, *He bent the heavens and came down*—where did He come down?”[420]

Rabbi Yose said in the name of Rabbi Yehudah, in the name of Rabbi Ḥiyya, “He descended His rungs, from rung to rung, from crown to crown, until He joined this earth. Then the moon shone, waxing full, as is written: *He bent the heavens and came down*; thus it is written: *above Mount Sinai*. What stands *above Mount Sinai*? You must say, *Shekhinah*.”[421]

Rabbi Abba said, “From here: *because YHVH had descended upon it in fire* (Exodus 19:18), and similarly: *For YHVH your God is a consuming fire* (Deuteronomy 4:24), and: *And YHVH rained upon Sodom* [*and Gomorrah brimstone and fire*] (Genesis 19:24). *And YHVH rained*—earth. And from where did She obtain this? The end of the verse demonstrates it, as is written: *from YHVH out of heaven* (ibid.)—*out of heaven,* really!”[422]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “From here: *Elohim spoke all* (Exodus 20:1). *All*—totality of all, for on this depends all.”[423]

You shall have no other אלהים (*elohim*), *gods* (Exodus 20:3). Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “Aside from *Shekhinah*. פני על (*Al panai*), *Beside My faces* (ibid.)—aside from the faces of the King, in which the Holy King becomes manifest. They are His name, and He is they. He is His name, as is written: *I am YHVH, that is My name* (Isaiah 42:8). He and His name are one. Blessed be He forever and ever!”[424]

Rabbi Shim’on taught, “Happy are Israel, for the blessed Holy One called them אדם (*adam*), human, as is written: *You, My flock, flock of My pasture, are adam, human* (Ezekiel 34:31); *When adam, a person, among you brings an offering to YHVH* (Leviticus 1:2). Why did He call

them *adam*? Because it is written: *you, cleaving to YHVH your God* (Deuteronomy 4:4)—*you,* and not other nations. Therefore, *you are human* (Ezekiel, ibid.)—*you* are called *human;* other nations are not called *human*."[425]

For it has been taught: Rabbi Shim'on said, "When an Israelite son is circumcised, he enters the covenant that the blessed Holy One made with Abraham—as is written: *YHVH blessed Abraham with all* (Genesis 24:1), and it is written: חסד (*Ḥesed*), *Loving-kindness, to Abraham* (Micah 7:20)—and he begins to enter this *adam,* human. Once he succeeds in fulfilling the commandments of Torah, he enters this *adam* and cleaves to the body of the King and is called *human*. The seed of Israel are called *human*.[426]

"Come and see: Of Ishmael is written *He will be* פרא אדם (*pere adam*), *a wild ass of a human* (Genesis 16:12)—and not *adam, a human,* because he was circumcised and possessed the beginnings of *a human,* as is written: *Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin* (ibid. 17:25). Once he was circumcised, he entered this beginning called *all,* as is written: *He will be a wild ass of a human*—not *a human; his hand* בכל (*ba-kol*), *against all* (ibid. 16:12)—*his hand ba-kol, in all,* precisely, no further, because he did not fulfill the commandments of Torah. He possessed the beginning, since he was circumcised, yet he was not fulfilled by commandments of Torah. But the seed of Israel, fulfilled in all, are called *human—human,* really! And it is written: *For YHVH's share is His people, Jacob His allotted inheritance* (Deuteronomy 32:9)."[427]

Rabbi Yose said, "All faces are permitted, except the face of a human."[428]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "When formed, it appears engraved in engravings consummately."[429]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "This accords with the saying: 'His intermingling with spirit appears in a form."[430]

Rabbi Yehudah was going from Cappadocia to Lydda to see Rabbi Shim’on, who was there, and Rabbi Ḥizkiyah was accompanying him.[431] Rabbi Yehudah said to Rabbi Ḥizkiyah, “Concerning what we learned in the presence of Rabbi Shim’on: *He will be* [86b] *a wild ass of a human* (Genesis 16:12)—surely, it is so; this is lucidity of the word! As for the conclusion of the verse, what does it mean: *in the presence of all his brothers will he dwell* (ibid.)?”[432]

He replied, “I have not heard and I will not say, for we have learned: *This is the Torah that Moses set before the Children of Israel* (Deuteronomy 4:44)—what *Moses set,* you can say; what *Moses* did not *set,* you cannot say.”[433]

Rabbi Yehudah opened and expounded, “*For she is* ח״ך (*ḥayyekha*), *your life, and the length of your days* (Deuteronomy 30:20).[434] One who attains Torah and does not part from her attains two lives, one in this world and one in the world that is coming, for it is written: *ḥayyekha, your lives*—two! Whoever separates from Torah is like one who separates from life, and one who separates from Rabbi Shim’on is as if he separates from all. Now, if we could not enter this verse, to which he opened a door, then words of Torah that are concealed—how much more so! Woe to the generation from which Rabbi Shim’on departs! For when we are in the presence of Rabbi Shim’on, springs of the heart are open in every direction and all is revealed, but when we separate from him we know nothing and all springs are stopped.”[435]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah said, “Corresponding to what is written: *He held back some of the spirit that was upon him and put it upon the seventy men, the elders* (Numbers 11:25)—like a lamp from which many lamps are lit, while retaining its vitality. Similarly, Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai, Master of Lamps, illumines all, yet light does not depart from him and he retains vitality.”[436]

They went on until they reached him. When they reached him, they found him sitting engaged in Torah, and

he was saying, *"A prayer of a poor person when he is faint and pours out his complaint before YHVH* (Psalms 102:1). Every prayer of Israel is genuine, but the prayer of a poor person transcends them all. Why? Because this one rises to the King's Throne of Glory, crowning His head, and the blessed Holy One is glorified by that prayer. This is *prayer of a poor person*—truly called *prayer*.[437]

"*When* יעטף (*ya'atof*), *he is faint* (Psalms, ibid.). This עטופא (*ittufa*) is not wrapping in a garment, for he has none; rather, here is written *when ya'atof,* and there is written העטופים (*ha-atufim*), *who faint, from hunger* (Lamentations 2:19).[438]

"*And pours out his complaint before YHVH* (Psalms, ibid.)—complaining before his Lord, which is pleasing to the blessed Holy One, since the world is sustained by him when other pillars of the world are not to be found.[439] Woe to one against whom that poor person complains to his Lord! For a poor person is closer to the King than anyone, as is written: *When he cries out to Me, I will listen* (Exodus 22:26)—whereas to other inhabitants of the world, sometimes He listens and sometimes not. Why? Because the King dwells in these broken vessels, as is written: *with the crushed and lowly in spirit* (Isaiah 57:15), and similarly: *YHVH is near to the brokenhearted* (Psalms 34:19); *A broken and crushed heart, O God, You will not spurn* (ibid. 51:19).[440]

"From here we learn: One who rebukes a poor person rebukes *Shekhinah*, as is written: *with the crushed and lowly in spirit;* and it is written: *For YHVH will plead their cause, and will rob the soul of those who rob them* (Proverbs 22:23). Their Guardian is powerful, ruling over all—not needing witnesses or another judge, not accepting a pledge like other judges. And what pledge does He take? A person's soul, as is written: *and will rob the soul of those who rob them*."[441]

Further, he said, "תפלה (*Tefillah*), *A prayer, of a poor person* (Psalms 102:1)—wherever *tefillah, prayer,* is mentioned, it is a supernal entity, ascending to a place

where the blessed Holy One grasps *tefillah* of the head, namely, tefillin worn by the King."[442]

Rabbi Shim'on turned his head and saw Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Ḥizkiyah, who had reached him. After he finished, he gazed at them, and said, "You had a treasure and you've lost it!"[443]

They replied, "Surely! For our Master opened a supernal door and we cannot enter it."[444]

He said, "What is it?"

They replied, "*He will be a wild ass of a human* (Genesis 16:12), and we want to know the conclusion of the verse: *in the presence of all his brothers will he dwell*. For look, we know the lucidity of the whole verse, but this we do not know, since the end of the verse does not resemble its beginning!"[445]

He said to them, "Upon your life! All is one matter, ascending to a single rung.[446]

"It has been taught: How many faces upon faces has the blessed Holy One! Shining faces, dim faces; high faces, low faces; distant faces, [87a] near faces; inner faces, outer faces; right faces, left faces.[447]

"Come and see: Happy are Israel before the blessed Holy One, for they are united with high faces of the King—faces with which He and His Name are united, faces that are He and His Name! Other nations are united with those distant faces, with those low faces; so they are distant from the body of the King.[448] For we see all those Egyptians, related to Ishmael—he had numerous brothers and relatives, all of whom were in those low faces, those distant faces. Yet on account of Abraham, when Ishmael was circumcised he was privileged to set his allotted abode in a place that dominated all those distant, low faces, all those faces of other nations, as is written: על פני (*al penei*), *above the faces of, all his brothers will he dwell* (Genesis 16:12)—namely, he will set his allotted abode above them all, as is written: *his hand in all* (ibid.), ruling over all those faces

below. Therefore, *above the faces of all his brothers,* surely, for they had no such privilege."[449]

Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Ḥizkiyah came and kissed his hands. Rabbi Yehudah said, "Just as we say: 'Wine on its lees, and bubbling of a well adorned with a wreath of hearts of palm.' Woe to the world when our Master departs from it! Woe to the generation that arises in that time! Happy is the generation that recognizes the Master! Happy is the generation in which he dwells!"[450]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah said, "Look, we have learned: When a convert is circumcised, he is called גר צדק (*ger tsedeq*), convert of Righteousness, and nothing more. Yet here, our Master has said, *His hand in all* (Genesis 16:12)!"[451]

Rabbi Shim'on replied, "All is linked in oneness. But this we learned concerning a convert, whereas Ishmael is different, for he is not a convert—rather, son of Abraham, son of a saint! Of Ishmael is written *Behold, I have blessed him* (Genesis 17:20), and elsewhere is written *YHVH blessed Abraham with all* (Genesis 24:1). Therefore it is written: *his hand in all*.[452]

"Thus, *above the faces of all his brothers will he dwell* (Genesis 16:12). For if his relatives are circumcised, they are called 'converts of Righteousness,' and nothing more, whereas he surpasses them all. All the more so, those who are uncircumcised, inhering in those distant faces, those low faces; whereas his abode transcends all their faces and all the faces of other nations, as is written: *above the faces of all his brothers will he dwell*."[453]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Therefore, the blessed Holy One proclaimed, *You shall have no other gods* על פני (*al panai*), *beside My faces* (Exodus 20:3)—for these are His."[454]

You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any form (Exodus 20:4). This has already been discussed. Rabbi Yose said, "All faces are permitted, except the face of a human, for this face has dominion over all."[455]

Alternatively, *You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any form*. Rabbi Yitsḥak opened, "*Do not let your mouth induce your flesh to sin* (Ecclesiastes 5:5). How careful a person should be with words of Torah! How vigilant he should be not to err in them, not to derive from Torah what he does not know or has not received from his teacher! For whoever utters words of Torah that he does not know or has not received from his teacher, of him is written *You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any form*. The blessed Holy One will eventually punish him in the world that is coming, when his soul seeks to enter her place, for she will be thrust away and cut off from that realm where other souls are bound in the bundle of life."[456]

Rabbi Yehudah says, "As we have learned from here: *Why should God be angry at your voice?* (Ecclesiastes, ibid.) —a person's soul."[457]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "It is written: *For I, YHVH your God, am a jealous God* (Exodus 20:5). How so? He is jealous for His Name totally. If on account of faces, He is jealous for His Name because it is betrayed. If on account of Torah, well, we have learned: Torah is entirely a Holy Name, for you cannot find a word in Torah that is not included in His Holy Name. Therefore, one must be vigilant so as not to err in His Name and betray it. Whoever betrays the King is not conducted into the King's palace and is cut off from the world that is coming."[458]

Rabbi Abba said, "Here is written *You shall not make for yourself* פסל (*phesel*), *a carved image* (Exodus 20:4), and there is written [87b] פסל (*Pesol*), *Carve, yourself two tablets of stone* (ibid. 34:1). In other words, *you shall not make for yourself a carved image*—you shall not make for yourself another Torah, which you do not know and which your teacher did not convey to you. Why? *For I, YHVH your God, am a jealous God* (Exodus 20:5)—'I am the one who will eventually punish you in the world that is coming'—when

the soul seeks to enter His presence. How many will be lying in wait to betray her and conduct her into Hell!”[459]

It has been taught: Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “*You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any form*—for a person must not betray the Name of the blessed Holy One. For the first link connecting Israel to the blessed Holy One was when they were circumcised; this is the first of all: to enter the covenant of Abraham, bond of *Shekhinah*. A person must not betray this covenant, for whoever betrays this covenant betrays the blessed Holy One. What is betrayal? Inserting this covenant into another domain, as is written: *He has married the daughter of an alien god* (Malachi 2:11).”[460]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “From here: *They betrayed YHVH because they bore alien children* (Hosea 5:7). Whoever betrays this covenant betrays the blessed Holy One, for this covenant is joined with the blessed Holy One, and it is written: *You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any form….You shall not bow down to them and you shall not worship them* (Exodus 20:4–5).”[461]

Rabbi El’azar was walking on the way, accompanied by Rabbi Ḥiyya. Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “It is written: *And you see among the captives a woman of beautiful form* [*and you desire her and take her for yourself as wife*] (Deuteronomy 21:11). Why? Look at what is written: *You shall not intermarry with them* (ibid. 7:3)!”[462]

He replied, “While they remain under their dominion.[463]

“Come and see: You cannot find a woman among other nations who is suitably proper. For we have learned: Why is this portion adjoined to *a wayward and rebellious son* (Deuteronomy 21:18)? Well, surely: one who marries this woman will inherit from her *a wayward and rebellious son*.[464] Why? Because it is difficult to remove filth from her—especially one who was already married, for judgment clings to judgment and is absorbed by her, and this filth is

difficult to remove from her. This corresponds to what Moses said concerning the women of Midian: *Every woman who has known a man by lying with a male, kill!* (Numbers 31:17).[465]

"Happy is the share of the person who inherits this legacy and preserves it! For by this holy inheritance, one cleaves to the blessed Holy One—all the more so if he attains the commandments of Torah, for look, the King extends His right hand toward him and he cleaves to the holy body! Therefore, of Israel is written *You, cleaving to YHVH your God* (Deuteronomy 4:4), and similarly: *You are sons of YHVH* (ibid. 14:1)—*You are sons,* literally, as is written: *My son, My firstborn, is Israel* (Exodus 4:22), and similarly: *Israel, in whom I glory* (Isaiah 49:3)."[466]

You shall not take the name of YHVH your God in vain (Exodus 20:7).

Rabbi Shim'on opened, "*Elisha said to her, 'What can I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?'* (2 Kings 4:2). Elisha was asking her, 'Don't you have anything upon which the blessing of the blessed Holy One can settle?' For we have learned: A person is forbidden to bless over an empty table. Why? Because blessing from above does not settle in emptiness. Therefore, one should arrange on his table one or more loaves of bread over which to bless; and if he cannot, he should leave some of the food he has eaten, over which he can bless, so that he does not find himself blessing emptily.[467]

"Once she said *Your maidservant has nothing at all in the house, except a flask of oil* (2 Kings 4:2), he replied, 'Surely, this will hold a complete blessing—as is written: *a good name from fine oil* (Ecclesiastes 7:1)!' For the Holy Name issues from oil, kindling holy lamps. What is this oil? As is written: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden* (Genesis 2:10)."[468]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “As is written: *like precious oil on the head*… (Psalms 133:2).”[469]

Rabbi El’azar said, “These are mountains of pure balsam.”[470]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “*A good name* (Ecclesiastes 7:1)—how good is the supernal Name of holy lamps, all of which glow *from fine oil,* as I have said. From here we learn: A person is forbidden to mention the name of the blessed Holy One emptily. Whoever does so—better for him if he had never been created!”[471]

Rabbi El’azar said, “One should mention the Holy Name only after another word [88a]—for look, the Holy Name is mentioned in the Torah only after two words, as is written: בראשית ברא אלהים (*Be-reshit bara Elohim*), *In the beginning, God created* (Genesis 1:1).”[472]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “The Holy Name is mentioned only in connection with a complete world, as is written: *on the day that YHVH Elohim made earth and heaven* (Genesis 2:4). Hence, one should not mention the Holy Name emptily, and it is written: *You shall not take the name of YHVH your God in vain* (Exodus 20:7).”[473]

We have learned: Rabbi Yose said, “What is blessing? The Holy Name, from which blessing appears for the whole world. Blessing does not appear in an empty place nor settle there, as is written: *You shall not take the name of YHVH your God in vain*.”[474]

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy (Exodus 20:8).

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “It is written: *God blessed the seventh day* (Genesis 2:3), and it is written: *Six days you shall gather it, and on the seventh day is Sabbath, there will be none then* (Exodus 16:26). Since no food is found on it, what blessing is there?[475] Well, it has been taught: All blessings above and below depend upon the seventh day. And it has been taught: Why did manna not

appear on the seventh day? Because from that day all six supernal days are blessed, and every single one conveys nourishment, each on its day, from the blessing bestowed upon it on the seventh day.[476]

"Therefore, whoever attains the rung of faith should arrange his table on the eve of Sabbath, so that his table may be blessed throughout those six days. For at that time blessing is prepared for all six days of the week, and no blessing appears on an empty table. Consequently, one should arrange his table on Sabbath eve with bread and food."[477]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "Even on the Sabbath day too!"[478]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "One should delight on this day, eating three meals on Sabbath, so that satisfaction and delight may prevail this day in the world."[479]

Rabbi Abba said, "To couple with those days above, blessed by this day. On this day the head of the Short-Tempered One is filled with dew descending from the Holy Ancient One, concealed of all, and He casts it into the Holy Apple Orchard three times once Sabbath enters, so that all are blessed as one. A person should delight on these three occasions, for supernal faith depends upon the Holy Ancient One, the Short-Tempered One, and the Apple Orchard, and one should delight in them and rejoice in them. Whoever omits one of those meals exposes a defect above, and that person's punishment is severe. Therefore one should arrange his table three times once Sabbath enters, so that his table will not be empty and blessing will settle upon it throughout all other days of the week. By this, one demonstrates faith above; upon this, it depends."[480]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "If one completes three meals on Sabbath, a voice issues and proclaims: *Then you will delight* על יהוה (*al YHVH*), *above YHVH*—one meal, corresponding to the Ancient One, Holy of all holies. *And I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth*—another meal, corresponding to the Holy Apple Orchard. *And I will feed*

you the inheritance of your father Jacob (Isaiah 58:14)—consummation completed in the Short-Tempered One. Corresponding to Him, one should complete the meals, delighting in all those meals, rejoicing in every single one, for this is complete faith. Therefore, Sabbath is more highly honored than all other festivals and holy days, since within it all is found, and such is not the case with all those festivals and holy days."[481]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "Therefore, since within it all is found, it is mentioned three times, as is written: *God completed on the seventh day, He ceased on the seventh day, God blessed the seventh day* (Genesis 2:2–3)."[482]

When Rabbi Abba was sitting at a Sabbath meal, he would rejoice in each one. He would say, "This is the holy meal of the Holy Ancient One, concealed of all!" At another meal he would say, "This is the meal of the blessed Holy One!" And so with every meal, rejoicing in each one. When he had [88b] completed the meals, he would say, "The meals of faith are completed."[483]

Rabbi Shim'on would say as follows: "Prepare the meal of faith! Prepare the meal of the King!" When he sat down, a proclamation would be made about him: *Then you will delight above YHVH, and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth, and I will feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob* (Isaiah 58:14).[484]

Rabbi El'azar asked his father, "How are these meals arranged?"[485]

He replied, "Of Sabbath eve is written *and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth*—that very night *Matronita* is blessed along with the entire Apple Orchard, and a person's table is blessed and a soul added. That night is joy of *Matronita,* and one should revel in joy and partake in the meal of *Matronita*.[486]

"Of Sabbath day, the second meal, is written *Then you will delight* על יהוה (*al YHVH*), *upon YHVH—above YHVH,* precisely! For at that moment the Holy Ancient One becomes

manifest, and all worlds are joyously fulfilled. We actualize the joy of the Ancient One; the meal is His, surely![487]

"Of the third Sabbath meal is written *and I will feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob*—meal of the Short-Tempered One, who becomes complete, and all those six days are blessed from that completeness. One should rejoice in His meal, completing these meals, which are meals of complete faith of the holy seed of Israel—to whom alone this supernal faith belongs, not to other peoples; therefore He said, *between Me and the Children of Israel* (Exodus 31:17).[488]

"Come and see: By these meals Israel are recognized as children of the King, as belonging to the royal palace, as scions of faith.[489] Whoever impairs one of these meals exposes a defect above and demonstrates that he is not one of the children of the King nor a member of the royal palace nor of the holy seed of Israel. He is inflicted with the severity of three elements: the judgment of Hell…[490]

"Come and see: On all other festivals and holy days, one should rejoice himself and give joy to the poor. If he rejoices alone without providing for the poor, his punishment is severe, since he rejoices alone without giving joy to another. Of him is written *I will spread dung upon your faces, the dung of your festivals* (Malachi 2:3). Whereas on Sabbath if he rejoices even without giving to others, he is not inflicted with punishment as on other festivals and holy days, for it is written: *the dung of your festivals—the dung of your festivals,* not *your Sabbaths*. Similarly, it is written: *Your new moons and festivals My soul hates* (Isaiah 1:14), whereas it does not mention *Sabbath*. Therefore it is written: *between Me and the Children of Israel*.[491]

"Since all of faith inheres in Sabbath, a person is given another soul, a supernal soul, a soul containing all perfection, on the model of the world that is coming. Therefore it is called Sabbath. What is Sabbath? Name of the blessed Holy One, a name complete on all sides."[492]

Rabbi Yose said, “Certainly so! Woe to one who does not complete the joy of the Holy King! What is His joy? These three meals of faith, meals encompassing Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—all of them joy upon joy, faith complete on all sides.[493]

“It has been taught: On this day the patriarchs are crowned and all the children suckle, unlike all other holy days and festivals. On this day the wicked in Hell find rest. On this day all judgments are suppressed, not arousing in the world. On this day Torah is crowned with perfect crowns. On this day joy and delight are heard throughout 250 worlds.[494]

“Come and see: On all six days of the week, when the hour of *minḥah* arrives, harsh Judgment rules and all judgments arouse. On the Sabbath day, when the time of *minḥah* arrives, Will of Wills appears and the Holy Ancient One reveals His will; all judgments are suppressed, and favor and joy pervade everywhere.[495]

“Through this will, Moses—holy, faithful prophet—departed from the world, in order to demonstrate that he did not depart by Judgment. At that moment, [89a] through the will of the Holy Ancient One his soul left and was concealed therein. Therefore it is written: *No man knows his burial place* (Deuteronomy 34:6). Just as the Holy Ancient One is concealed of all concealed, unknown by those above or below, so here of this soul—concealed within this will appearing at *minḥah* of Sabbath—is written *No man knows his burial place*. It is more concealed than anything in the world, and Judgment has no dominion over it. Happy is the share of Moses![496]

“It has been taught: On this day when Torah is crowned, it is crowned with all: with all those commandments, with all those decrees and punishments, with seventy branches of light, radiating on every side. Who has seen the branches emerging from each branch—five standing within the tree, to which all branches are attached? Who has seen those

gates, open on every side, all radiant and resplendent with that streaming light issuing ceaselessly.[497]

"The voice of a herald proclaims: 'Arise, supernal holy ones! Arise, holy people, chosen above and below! Arouse joy toward your Lord! Arise in complete joy! Prepare yourselves with three joys, with three patriarchs! Prepare to greet the faith of joy of all joys! Happy is your share, O holy Israel, in this world and in the world that is coming! This is your heritage, distinct from all other nations, of which is written *between Me and the Children of Israel.*'"[498]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Surely it is written: *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy* (Exodus 20:8), and: *You shall be holy, for I YHVH am holy* (Leviticus 19:2), and: *Call the Sabbath 'delight,' the holy of YHVH 'honored'* (Isaiah 58:13).[499]

"It has been taught: On this day all souls of the righteous revel in the delights of the Holy Ancient One, concealed of all concealed. A spirit of this bliss spreads through all worlds, ascending and descending, extending to all the holy children, to all guardians of Torah, and they rest in perfect tranquility, each of them forgetting all agitation, judgments, and toil, as is written: *On the day that YHVH gives you rest from your distress and your agitation, and from the hard labor* (Isaiah 14:3).[500] Therefore Sabbath is equivalent to Torah, and whoever observes the Sabbath is considered to have observed the entire Torah. It is written: *Happy is the human who does this, and the son of man who grasps it: keeping the Sabbath without profaning it and keeping his hand from doing any evil* (ibid. 56:2)—implying that one who keeps the Sabbath is like one who keeps the entire Torah."[501]

One day, when Rabbi Yudai encountered Rabbi Shim'on on the road, he asked him, "Rabbi, look at what is written in this passage concerning Sabbath spoken by Isaiah: *Thus*

says YHVH: As for the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, [*who have chosen what I desire and grasp My covenant*]—*I will give them, in My house and within My walls,* [*a monument and a name better than sons and daughters. An everlasting name I will give them, that will not be cut off*] (Isaiah 56:4–5). What does this indicate?”[502]

He replied, “Cappadocian! With your donkey?[503] Tie it up by its pommel and dismount,[504] for a word of Torah requires thirsting clarity.[505] Or reverse it behind you and follow me, and focus your mind!”

He said to him, “Because of my Master I undertook this journey, and following my Master I will gaze upon *Shekhinah*!”[506]

He said to him, “Come and see: This matter has already been established by the Companions, though they did not elucidate.[507] *Thus says YHVH: As for the eunuchs*. Who are *eunuchs*? These are the Companions who engage in Torah, emasculating themselves all six days, and on Sabbath eve they arouse themselves for their coupling, for they know the supernal mystery of the hour when *Matronita* couples with the King.[508]

“Those Companions who know this mystery concentrate their hearts on the faith of their Lord, and are blessed on that night with fruit of their loins. This is what is written: *who keep* [*My Sabbaths*] (Isaiah 56:4), as is said: *His father kept the matter in mind* (Genesis 37:11).[509] They are called *eunuchs,* surely—awaiting the Sabbath, to discover the desire of their Lord, as is written: *who have chosen what I desire* (Isaiah, ibid.)—unspecified. What is *what I desire*? Coupling of *Matronita*. *And grasp My covenant* (ibid.)—all is one: *My covenant*—unspecified. Happy is the share of one who is sanctified in this holiness and knows this mystery![510]

“Come and see! It is written: *Six days you shall labor and do all* [89b] *your work, but the seventh day is Sabbath to YHVH your God…* (Exodus 20:9–10). *All your work*—on those six days, the work of all human beings; therefore the

Companions couple only when human work is not to be found, but rather the work of the blessed Holy One. And what is His work? Coupling of *Matronita*. Consequently, the Companions sanctify themselves in the holiness of their Lord, concentrating their hearts, and fine children issue, children not straying to the right or to the left, children of the King and *Matronita*. Therefore, mystery of the matter is written: *You are children of YHVH your God* (Deuteronomy 14:1), literally! For these are called His children, children of the King and *Matronita*.[511]

"Such is the awareness of the Companions, who know this mystery; to this they cleave. Therefore they are called children of the blessed Holy One. These are the ones for whose sake the world is sustained. When the world is arraigned in judgment, the blessed Holy One gazes upon these children of His and has mercy on the world.[512] Of this is written *entirely seed of truth* (Jeremiah 2:21)—*seed of truth,* precisely! What is *truth*? The holy, perfect signet ring, as is said: *You will give truth to Jacob* (Micah 7:20). *Truth* is the blessed Holy One, and all is one. Thus, *seed of truth,* surely!"[513]

Rabbi Yudai said to him, "Blessed is the Compassionate One, who sent me here! Blessed is the Compassionate One, for I have heard this word from your mouth!"

Rabbi Yudai wept.

Rabbi Shim'on asked, "Why are you weeping?"

He replied, "I weep because I am thinking: Woe to those inhabitants of the world whose ways are like beasts, neither knowing nor considering! Better for them if they had never been created![514] Woe to the world when my Master departs from it, for who will be able to reveal mysteries, and who will know them? Who will contemplate the ways of Torah?"

He said to him, "By your life! The world consists only of those Companions who engage in Torah and know its secrets. Surely, the Companions rightly decreed against the ignorant—who corrupt their ways and cannot distinguish

between right and left, for they are like beasts—that it is fitting to punish them even on Yom Kippur. Of their children is written *They are children of whoredom* (Hosea 2:6)—*children of whoredom,* precisely!"[515]

He said to him, "Rabbi, this verse needs to be settled in its paths. It is written: ונתתי להם (*Ve-natatti la-hem*), *I will give them, in My house and within My walls, a monument and a name better than sons and daughters. An everlasting name* אתן לו (*etten lo*), *I will give him* (Isaiah 56:5). The verse should read אתן להם (*etten la-hem*), *I will give them*. Why *etten lo, I will give him*?"[516]

He replied, "Come and see: *I will give them, in My house*. What is *My house*? As is said: *In all My house he is trusted* (Numbers 12:7). The name of the blessed Holy One is called *house*.[517]

"*And within My walls*—as is said: *Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted watchmen* (Isaiah 62:6).[518]

"יד (*Yad*), *A monument, and a name*—meaning: they will draw holy souls from this place; and that *yad,* portion, of fine perfection is full of sons and daughters.[519]

"*An everlasting name I will give him*—to that perfect portion.[520]

"*That will not be cut off*—for generations upon generations.

"Alternatively, *I will give him*—to the one who knows the mystery of the matter and concentrates on what is essential."[521]

Rabbi Shim'on said further, "It is written: *You shall not kindle fire in all your dwellings on the Sabbath day* (Exodus 35:3). Why? So that Judgment will not appear on this day. Now, you might say, 'Look, it ascends to the Most High!' Well, it says *in all your dwellings,* not *to the Most High*. That one ascending to the Most High ascends to subdue another Judgment. For we have learned: 'There is fire consuming fire,' and fire of the altar consumes another fire. Therefore, the Holy Ancient One reveals itself on this day more than on

any other day, and when the Ancient One becomes manifest, Judgment does not appear at all, and all those above and below are in perfect joy, and Judgment has no dominion."[522] It has been taught: It is written: *For six days YHVH made, heaven and earth* (Exodus 20:11)—*six days,* not *in six days*. These holy, supernal days are called days in which the Holy Name is interwoven, and they are interwoven in it. Happy is the share of Israel above all other nations! Of them is written *You, cleaving to YHVH your God, are alive every one of you today!* (Deuteronomy 4:4).[523] [90a]

Honor your father and your mother (Exodus 20:12).

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, "*A river issues from Eden to water the garden* (Genesis 2:10). *A river*—gushing of the spring issuing constantly, never ceasing; from the river of this spring the whole garden is watered. The river of that holy spring is called Father. Why? Because it flows to nourish the garden."[524]

Rabbi Abba said, "*Eden* itself is called Father, because this *Eden* derives from the place called אין (*Ayin*), Nothingness. Therefore, it is called Father, and we have established: The place from which all begins to flow is called אתה (*Attah*), You, as is said: *For attah, You, are our father* (Isaiah 63:16)."[525]

Rabbi El'azar said, "*Honor your father*—the blessed Holy One. *And your mother*—Assembly of Israel.[526] את אביך (*Et avikha*), *your father*—precisely, to include *Shekhinah*."[527]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "*Honor your father*—unspecified. *And your mother*—unspecified. For all is in the reckoning. את (*Et*)—to encompass everything above and below."[528]

Rabbi Yose said, "As for what Rabbi Abba said—'The place from which all begins to flow'—that is fine, for we have learned: 'That which is concealed and has no beginning we call הוא (*Hu*), He. The place from which beginning appears we call אתה (*Attah*), You, and it is called

Father, and all is one. Blessed be His Name forever and ever. Amen.’”[529]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah said, “Surely, all is one! *Honor your father*—the blessed Holy One. *And your mother*—Assembly of Israel. Yet look at what we have learned: Rabbi Shim’on said, ‘It is written: *You are children of* YHVH *your God* (Deuteronomy 14:1)—that place called *children*.’ Thus, the unspecified wording: *your father and your mother*—including all, above and below.”[530]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “Including one’s teacher, who conducts him into the world that is coming.”[531]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “He is included with the blessed Holy One.”[532]

In these five all is included. In these five utterances are engraved five others—surely, five within five. How so?[533]

I am YHVH *your God* (Exodus 20:2), corresponding to *You shall not murder* (ibid., 13), for we have learned: Rabbi Yitsḥak said in the name of Rabbi Yehudah, “These two comprise a single principle, since one who kills diminishes the likeness and image of his Lord, as is written: *for in the image of God He made the human* (Genesis 9:6), and similarly: *upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of a human* (Ezekiel 1:26).”[534]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “It is written: *He who sheds the blood of a human, by a human his blood shall be shed*… (Genesis 9:6). *He who sheds the blood of a human*—whoever sheds blood is considered as if he diminishes the likeness and image above. Namely, he has not diminished this likeness, but rather another likeness, as implied by what is written: *He who sheds the blood of a human,* באדם (*ba-adam*), *in the human*—this defect from the blood that he shed reaches *the human*. Why? *For in the image of God He made the human*. Therefore, one depends on the other.”[535]

You shall have no [*other gods beside Me*] (Exodus 20:3), corresponding to *You shall not commit adultery* (ibid., 13),

for he betrays the name of the blessed Holy One, engraved in a person. Many, many sins, decrees, and punishments depend on this. Whoever betrays this betrays the King, as is written: *They betrayed YHVH because they bore alien children* (Hosea 5:7), and similarly: *You shall not bow down to them and you shall not worship them* (Exodus 20:5). One depends on the other.[536]

You shall not take [*the name of YHVH your God in vain*] (ibid., 7), corresponding to *You shall not steal* (ibid., 13), and it is written: *A thief 's accomplice hates himself; he hears the adjuration and does not testify* (Proverbs 29:24). Surely, one depends on the other, for the thief is destined to swear falsely; whoever does this, does that.[537]

Remember the Sabbath day (Exodus 20:8), corresponding to *You shall not bear false witness against your fellow* (ibid., 13), for Rabbi Yose said, "Sabbath is called testimony, and one must testify, as is written: *For six days YHVH made* [*heaven and earth… and He rested on the seventh day*] (ibid., 11), and Sabbath is totality of all." And Rabbi Yose said, "What is the meaning of the verse *You will give truth to Jacob* (Micah 7:20)? As is said: *The Children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath* (Exodus 31:16). Whoever bears false witness is false to the Sabbath, which is testimony to the truth; and whoever betrays the Sabbath betrays the whole Torah." Consequently, one depends on the other.[538]

Honor your father (Exodus 20:12), corresponding to *You shall not covet your neighbor's wife* (ibid., 14). Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "*Honor your father—your father,* precisely, for look, one who covets a woman and engenders a child, that child will honor another who is not [90b] his father!"[539]

It is written: *Honor your father…* (Exodus 20:12); *you shall not covet your neighbor's house or his field* (ibid., 14). And here is written *on the land that YHVH your God is giving you* (ibid., 12)—what He is giving you will be yours, and *you*

shall not covet something else. Surely, one depends on the other.[540]

These first five include the five others. Consequently, *From His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2), for all became *right*. Therefore, Torah was transmitted in five voices.[541]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "All were five within five, corresponding to Five Books of Torah."[542]

Rabbi El'azar taught, "In these ten utterances were engraved all the commandments of Torah, decrees and punishments, pure and impure, branches and roots, trees and plants, heaven and earth, ocean and depths.[543] For Torah is the name of the blessed Holy One. Just as the name of the blessed Holy One is engraved in ten utterances, so Torah is engraved in ten utterances. These ten utterances are the name of the blessed Holy One, and the whole Torah is one name, a holy name, literally! Happy is the share of one who attains it! Whoever attains Torah attains the name of the blessed Holy One, really!"[544]

Rabbi Yeisa said, "He attains the blessed Holy One Himself, for He and His name are one. Blessed is His name forever and ever!"[545]

You shall not make with Me gods of silver and gods of gold (Exodus 20:20).

Rabbi Yose said, "Why? Because it is written *Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold* (Haggai 2:8). Even though *Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold, You shall not make* אתי (*itti*), *with Me*—namely, אותי (*oti*), *Me*."[546]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "It is written: *There is none like You, O YHVH! You are great and Your name is great in power* (Jeremiah 10:6). *You are great and Your name is great*—corresponding to *Mine is the silver. In power*—corresponding to *and Mine is the gold*. These two colors are gloriously visible only when engraved in one place. In which

place are they engraved? As is said: *Israel, in whom I glory* (Isaiah 49:3)."[547]

Rabbi Yehudah opened, "*I will rejoice greatly in YHVH, my soul will exult in my God…* (Isaiah 61:10). Happy is the share of Israel above all other nations, for their joy and delight is in the blessed Holy One, as is written: *I will rejoice greatly in YHVH*. Since it says *in YHVH,* why is it written באלהי (*belohai*), *in my God*? Well, Israel said as follows: 'If He comes to us in Compassion, *I will rejoice greatly in YHVH*. If in Judgment, *my soul with exult belohai, in my God*. Why? Because these are engraved in Him, as is written: *For He has clothed me with garments of* ישע (*yesha*), *salvation* (ibid.). What are *garments of yesha*? Colors engraved, to gaze upon Him, as is said: ישעו (*Yish'u*), *They gazed, to YHVH* (2 Samuel 22:42). *Yesha* is *gazing*. Whoever wishes to gaze upon colors should gaze upon Me. How so? As is written: *He has wrapped me in a robe of righteousness* (Isaiah, ibid.)—real *righteousness,* in whom colors are engraved.[548]

"*As a bridegroom dons a turban*—one color. *As a bride adorns herself with jewels* (Isaiah, ibid.)—another color. When colors combine, they are immediately visible, and all yearn to see and gaze upon Him."[549]

Rabbi Yose said, "שוש אשיש (*Sos asis*), *I will rejoice greatly, in YHVH*—two joys in Compassion. *My soul will exult* באלהי (*belohai*), *in my God*—one joy in Judgment."[550]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "In all, joy upon joy. And the blessed Holy One intends to delight Israel with the joy of Zion, surpassing all joy, as is written: *The redeemed of YHVH will return, and come to Zion with jubilation*—one. *With eternal joy upon their heads*—two. *They will attain joy and gladness* (Isaiah 35:10)—four. Corresponding to the four times that Israel has been scattered among the nations. Of then is written *You will say on that day, 'Praise YHVH, proclaim His name…'* (ibid. 12:4)."[551]

God spoke all these words (Exodus 20:1). *All these words*—this totality is entirety of all, entirety of above and below.[552]

אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I* (Exodus 20:2)—mystery of the upper world, in mystery of the Holy Name, יהו (*YHV*).[553]

Anokhi, I—revealed and hidden. Revealed in holy mystery of the Throne, for the moon waxes full, as one, when the sun prevails and the moon is illumined. Her only praise is that [91a] of the light shining upon Her.[554]

Anokhi, I—consummating mysteries of perfection of the Throne below, and holy living beings ascend and She is arrayed in Her adornments. When She is beautiful to look upon and Her Husband approaches Her, She is called *Anokhi, I*.[555]

Anokhi, I—mystery of all as one, in totality of all letters, in paths of Torah radiating from supernal mystery. Upon this depend upper and lower mysteries.[556]

Anokhi, I—mystery of giving a fine reward to the righteous, who wait and observe the commandments of Torah. Through this, they have proper faith in the world that is coming. Your mnemonic is: אני פרעה (*Ani Par'oh*), *I am Pharaoh* (Genesis 41:44).[557]

Anokhi, I, and *You shall have no* [*other gods beside Me*] (Exodus 20:3) were spoken in the mystery of Torah, and this is *Remember* (ibid., 8) and *Observe* (Deuteronomy 5:12).[558]

Anokhi, I—sealed, hidden mystery of all those rungs of the supernal world in a single totality. As soon as *Anokhi, I,* was uttered, all united as one in one mystery.[559]

אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I*—mystery of two thrones: אני (*Ani*), כ (*kaf*) of another throne.[560]

Anokhi, I—for the Sanctuary was purified and no stranger approached it; the Sanctuary shone alone, for at that moment the evil impulse was abolished from the world, and the blessed Holy One alone was exalted in glory. Then was uttered *Anokhi, I, am YHVH your God*—complete mystery in the Holy Name.[561]

א (*Alef*)—mystery of unifying the Holy Name in its rungs to become one, so that it will be ו (*vav*).[562]

נ (*Nun*)—mystery of revering the blessed Holy One and knowing that there is Judgment and a Judge, a fine reward for the righteous and retribution for the wicked; for its mystery is lower ה (*he*).[563]

כ (*Kaf*)—to sanctify the Holy Name every day, to sanctify oneself on holy rungs, to offer prayer to Him at all times, so that the supernal crown, mystery of the upper Throne, may be raised above the supernal living beings fittingly. Its mystery is upper ה (*he*).[564]

י (*Yod*)—to engage in Torah day and night, to perform circumcision in mystery on the eighth day, to sanctify the firstborn, to don tefillin and tzitzit, to place a mezuzah, to surrender one's soul to the blessed Holy One, to cleave to Him.[565]

These are 12 supernal commandments, encompassing 236 other commandments, inhering in the mystery of *Anokhi, I*—totality of *Remember*. This letter is not permuted in this place, for it is י (*yod*)—supernal mystery, totality of Torah. In these twelve are twelve attributes of Compassion, depending on them, and one presiding, making thirteen.[566]

לֹא יִהְיֶה לְךָ (*Lo yihyeh lekha*), *You shall have no* [*other gods*]—mystery of *Observe,* with 365 commandments of Torah.[567]

ל (*Lamed*)—mystery of not honoring or respecting another god.[568]

ל (*Lamed*)—a tower flying, ascending in the air: that the heart should not stray to build it, as in the mystery of those who built a tower to another god.[569]

ל (*Lamed*)—not to turn to an image of idolatry, not to think about it, not to bow or submit oneself to another god.[570]

א (*Alef*)—not to substitute the unity of his Lord with other, false gods.[571]

א (*Alef*)—not to imagine that another god besides Him exists.

א (*Alef*)—not to stray after a ghost or familiar spirit, through the mystery of a human image or any other image.[572]

א (*Alef*)—not to inquire of the dead and not to engage in sorcery.

א (*Alef*)—not to swear orally by the name of another god.[573]

Look, here are 12 others—commandments of *Observe*. On these twelve depend 353 other commandments of *Observe,* included in these twelve. This mystery is: אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I*.[574]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Further, we have learned: אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I* (Exodus 20:2)—totality of above and below, totality of beings above and below, totality of holy living beings included therein, all in the mystery of *Anokhi*.[575]

"*You shall have no* [*other gods beside Me*] (Exodus 20:3)—below, mystery of twelve lower living beings.[576]

"*You shall not make for yourself* פסל (*phesel*), *a carved image* (Exodus 20:4)—פסלו (*pislu*), disqualification, from that supernal place, from that holy place. *Phesel, A carved image* —פסולת (*pesolet*), refuse, of holiness, which is mystery of another god. This mystery corresponds to what is said: *a stormy wind coming from the north, a great cloud* (Ezekiel 1:4).[577]

"*Or any form* (Exodus, ibid.)—as is written: *and flashing fire* (Ezekiel, ibid.).[578]

"*For I, YHVH your God* (Exodus, ibid., 5)—to arouse the heart upward, not to descend below, not to approach the gate of its house.[579]

"*Am a jealous God* (Exodus, ibid.)—for jealousy lies in that place. This is the mystery of *At three things the earth trembles* (Proverbs 30:21)—namely, *You shall not make for yourself,* one; *a carved image,* two; *or any form,* three. And from this, *earth* [91b] trembles.[580]

“*Inflicting the guilt of fathers upon sons, upon the third and upon the fourth generation* (Exodus 20:5)—a single tree, planted once, twice, three times, and four times, and punished for its initial sins. Father, son, third, and fourth are one—when not mended and not caring to be mended. Correspondingly, the opposite of this, for a tree restored fittingly and standing firm.”[581]

“לא תשא (*Lo tissa*), *You shall not take* [*the name of YHVH your God in vain*] (Exodus 20:7). This mystery has been established by the Companions. For when the blessed Holy One planted the world, He sank into the depths a single stone, engraved with this Name, plunging it into the deep. When the waters desire to rise, they see the mystery of the Holy Name engraved on that stone, and they retreat and subside, turning back. This name endures to this day in the deep.[582]

“When human beings swear an oath truly, upholding the truth, that stone rises and receives that oath, then returns, established upon the deep. The world endures, maintained by that oath of truth.

“When humans swear a false oath, that stone rises to receive it—but it is false! Then the stone rising turns back; waters surge and the letters of that stone fly through the depths and scatter. The waters verge on rising and covering the world, returning it to its original state.[583] But finally the blessed Holy One summons a prince, Ye’azriel, who is in charge of seventy keys in the mystery of the Holy Name.[584] He approaches that stone and engraves the letters upon it as before; then, the world endures, and the waters return to their place. Concerning this is written: לא תשא (*Lo tissa*), *You shall not raise, the name of YHVH your God* לשוא (*la-shav*), *falsely*.[585] [92a]

“זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day to hallow it* (Exodus 20:8). This is mystery of Holy Covenant, and since

within this covenant exist all springs of limbs of the body, it being totality of all, similarly Sabbath is totality of Torah, all mysteries of Torah depending upon it, and fulfilling the Sabbath is like fulfilling the entire Torah. Whoever observes the Sabbath is considered to have observed the whole Torah.[586] [92b]

"זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember,* is mystery of male—mystery of male who grasps all limbs of the supernal world.[587]

"את (*Et*) *the Sabbath day*—encompassing Entrance of Sabbath, who is night; this is *Et*.[588]

"*To hallow it*—for it needs holiness from the Holy People, to be crowned by them fittingly.[589]

"זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember*—a place that has no forgetting, where forgetting does not exist, since there is no forgetting in the site of supernal Covenant, all the more so above. Below, there is forgetting—a place that needs remembering, of which is written *May the iniquity of his fathers be remembered* (Psalms 109:14). There officials sit, recording a person's merits and sins. There is no forgetting before the Holy Throne—the one before it. And who is before it? זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember*. All the more so above, for all is mystery of male, wherein is engraved the mystery of the Holy Name יהו (*YHV*).[590]

"Below needs to be sanctified. How is it sanctified? By *Zakhor, Remember,* since from Him She absorbs all holiness, all blessings. This, when Entrance of Sabbath is crowned above the Holy People fittingly with prayers, supplications, and joyous arrangement.[591]

"Now, you might say that *Zakhor, Remember,* does not need to be sanctified. Not so, even though all holiness of the world issues from Him! For this needs to be sanctified by day, and that needs to be sanctified by night. Afterward, Israel receives all holiness, sanctified by the holiness of the blessed Holy One.[592] [93a]

“*Honor your father and your mother* (Exodus 20:12)—with all kinds of honor, delighting them with worthy deeds, as is said: *The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice* (Proverbs 23:24). This is how to honor one’s father and mother.

“*Honor your father and your mother*—as is said: *Honor YHVH with your substance* (Proverbs 3:9). *With your substance*—with your wealth. מהונך (*Me-honekha*), *With your substance*—מחנך (*me-ḥinnekha*), with your grace: with a joyous melody, delighting the heart, for this rejoices the heart. Similarly, melody of the whole world is worthy deeds, for such a son delights the heart of his father and mother.[593]

“*With your substance*—with your wealth, for whatever they need. Just as a person honors the blessed Holy One, so he should do for his father and mother, since they share in a single partnership over him with the blessed Holy One. As one should revere the blessed Holy One, so should one revere his father and mother, honoring them as one with all kinds of honor.[594]

“*So that your days may be prolonged* (Exodus 20:12)—for there are days above, on which a person’s life in this world depends. We have established those days of a human being in that world above, all of which stand before the blessed Holy One, and by them a person’s life is revealed.[595]

“על (*Al*), *Upon, the land that YHVH your God is giving you* (ibid.)—a promise to enjoy the resplendent speculum. This mystery is: *Al, Above, the land*—the resplendent speculum, those supernal days shining from the wellspring of all.[596]

“What is different about these two commandments of Torah, of which is written *so that your days may be prolonged*—this one and sending off the mother bird from the nest? Well, these two commandments are entirely dependent above. Father and mother, mystery of *remember* and *observe* as one, and therefore it is written: *so that your days may be prolonged*.[597]

“And concerning sending off from the nest, as is written: *Surely send off the mother, and the children you may take for yourself* (Deuteronomy 22:7)—mystery of the supernal world, whom one is not permitted to contemplate, who must be sent off from questioning and pondering.

“*And the children you may take for yourself* (ibid.)—as is written: *For ask now of primal days…from one end of heaven to the other end of heaven* (Deuteronomy 4:32)—but above the *end of heaven, surely send off* from your questioning thoughts.[598]

“Of this is written *so that* יטב (*yitav*), *it may go well, with you and you will prolong your days* (Deuteronomy 22:7). It is not written *so that* איטב (*itav*), *I may act well, with you, but rather so that yitav, it may act well, with you*. It is not written ויאריכון ימיך (*ve-ya’arikhun yamekha*), *and your days will be prolonged*, but rather והארכת ימים (*ve-ha’arakhta yamim*), *and you will prolong your days. So that it may act well with you*—the place that acts well toward all, namely, the concealed and hidden world. *And you will prolong* [93b] *your days*—as is written: *you may take for yourself* (ibid.), which lies within one’s power.[599]

“If one encounters the opportunity to act and he does so intently, happy is he! Even if he does not act intently, happy is he, for he has performed the command of his Lord. Yet one who fulfills the Will for its own sake with passionate intention—contemplating the glory of his Lord—is not reckoned like one who is unable to grasp the reasoning, since anything done for its own sake depends on aspiration, and by action below for its own sake, action ascends above, fittingly arrayed.[600]

“Similarly, by action of the body, action of the soul is arrayed through that intention; for the blessed Holy One desires a person’s heart and aspiration. Even so, if there is no intention, which is essence of all—concerning this, David prayed: *the work of our hands, establish for us…* (Psalms 90:17), for not everyone is wise enough to deploy his will

and heart to perfect all, fulfilling the act of *mitsvah*. Therefore he offered this prayer.

"*The work of our hands, establish for us*. What is *establish for us*? *Establish* and perfect Your arrayal fittingly above. *For us*—even though we do not know how to deploy the will, only the act itself.

"*The work of our hands, establish it* (Psalms, ibid.). *Establish* whom? The rung that needs to be perfected. *Establish it*—in a single bond with the patriarchs, arrayed with them fittingly in this action.[601]

"לא תרצח (*Lo tirtsaḥ*), *You shall not murder*. לא תנאף (*Lo tin'af*), *You shall not commit adultery*. לא תגנב (*Lo tignov*), *You shall not steal* (Exodus 20:13). לא (*Lo*), *Not*—interrupted by an accent in all these three. Otherwise, there would never be social order and we would be forbidden to kill anyone in the world, even if he transgressed the Torah. But being interrupted by an accent, it is forbidden and permitted.[602]

"לא תנאף (*Lo tin'af*), *You shall not commit adultery*. Were it not interrupted by an accent, it would be forbidden even to procreate or to delight with one's wife in the joy of *mitsvah*. Yet being interrupted by an accent, it is forbidden and permitted.[603]

"לא תגנב (*Lo tignov*), *You shall not steal*. Were it not interrupted by an accent, it would be forbidden even to appropriate the mind of one's teacher in Torah or the mind of a scholar by gazing upon him—or for a judge who adjudicates by listening to claims, who must trick a deceiver or trick both disputants in order to elucidate the judgment. Yet being interrupted by an accent, it is forbidden and permitted.[604]

"לא תענה (*Lo ta'aneh*), *You shall not bear, false witness against your fellow* (Exodus 20:13). Here, the accent does not interrupt, since this is totally forbidden.[605]

"In all words of Torah, the blessed Holy One has placed supernal mysteries, teaching human beings how to follow

the path to perfection, as is said: *I am YHVH your God, instructing you for your benefit, guiding you in the way you should go* (Isaiah 48:17).[606]

"So too, לא תחמד (*Lo taḥmod*), *You shall not covet* (Exodus 20:14)—not interrupted at all. Now, you might say, 'Even desiring Torah is forbidden, since the accent does not interrupt.' Well, come and see: In all of them, Torah spoke generally, while here specifically: *your neighbor's house, his field, or his servant*… (Deuteronomy 5:18)—all things of the world. But Torah is precious constantly, a delight, hidden treasures of life, length of days in this world and in the world that is coming.[607]

"These ten utterances of Torah are totality of commandments of Torah, entirety of above and below, entirety of ten utterances of Creation. These were engraved on tablets of stone, and all the treasures hidden within them were seen by the eyes of all—to know and gaze upon the mystery of 613 commandments of Torah, contained within them. All revealed to the eyes; all through understanding, contemplated by the heart of all Israel. All illumined their eyes at that moment; no mysteries of Torah, no higher or lower mysteries, were withheld from them, for they [94a] saw eye-to-eye the splendor of the glory of their Lord. Nothing like that day has ever occurred since the day that the world was created, for the blessed Holy One appeared in His glory upon Mount Sinai.[608]

"Now, you might say, 'But we have learned that a maidservant at the Red Sea saw what the prophet Ezekiel did not see—perhaps resembling that day when Israel stood at Mount Sinai.' Not so! For on the day that Israel stood at Mount Sinai, filth was eliminated from them and all bodies sparkled with the radiance of supernal angels when they are clothed in radiant garments to fulfill the mission of their Lord. In that radiant garment, they enter fire without fear—like the angel of Manoah, who appeared to him and entered

the flame and ascended to heaven, as is written: *The angel of YHVH ascended in the flame of the altar*… (Judges 13:20).

"When that filth was eliminated from them, the Israelites were left with lucent bodies, totally unsullied, and souls within like the radiance of heaven, to receive light. Such was the character of Israel, seeing and gazing into the glory of their Lord—which was not so at the Sea, when the filth had not yet been removed from them. Here at Sinai, as filth ceased from the body, even embryos in their mothers' wombs could see and gaze upon the glory of their Lord, and every single one received fittingly.[609]

"On that day, the blessed Holy One had greater joy than on the day the world was created. For on the day of Creation, the world did not exist enduringly—until Israel would receive the Torah, as is written: *Were it not for My covenant day and night, I would not have established the laws of heaven and earth* (Jeremiah 33:25). As soon as Israel received the Torah at Mount Sinai, the world became fragrantly firm and heaven and earth were established. The blessed Holy One was revealed above and below, exalted in His glory above all. Of that day is written *YHVH reigns, robed in grandeur; robed is YHVH, girded with strength* (Psalms 93:1). And *strength* is nothing but Torah, as is written: *YHVH gives strength to His people; YHVH blesses His people with peace* (Psalms 29:11)."[610]

REFERENCE MATTER

Abbreviations

ABD	David Noel Freedman, ed., *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
add.	addendum
Add.	Additional
Arukh	Nathan ben Yeḥiel of Rome, *Sefer he-Arukh*
Arukh ha-Shalem	Nathan ben Yeḥiel of Rome, *Arukh ha-Shalem*
Battei Midrashot	Shlomo Aharon Wertheimer, ed., *Battei Midrashot*
B.C.E.	before the Common Era
Beit ha-Midrash	Adolph Jellinek, ed., *Beit ha-Midrash*
BT	Babylonian Talmud
C9	MS Add. 1023, University Library, Cambridge
ca.	*circa*, approximately
C.E.	Common Era
Cremona	Cremona edition of the *Zohar*
Ct1	MS 104, Trinity College, Cambridge
Ct2	MS 105, Trinity College, Cambridge
DE	*Derekh Emet*, in *Sefer ha-Zohar*, ed. Reuven Margaliot
diss.	dissertation
ed.	editor (pl. eds.); edition; edited by
Edri	Yehuda Edri, trans., *Sefer ha-Zohar*

esp.	especially
fasc.	fascicle
fig. (plural, figs.)	figure (s)
frag.	fragmentary
Galante	Abraham Galante, in Or *ha-Ḥammah*, ed. Abraham Azulai
Haggahot Maharḥu	Ḥayyim Vital, *Haggahot Maharḥu*
Hash	*Hashmatot*
Heikh	*Heikhalot*
intro	introduction
IR	*Idra Rabba*
IZ	*Idra Zuta*
JT	Jerusalem Talmud
Ly3	MS 12, Bibliothèque municipale, Lyon
M	Mishnah
M5	MS Hebr. 20, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
M8	MS Hebr. 218, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
Ma’arikh	Menaḥem ben Judah de Lonzano, *Sefer ha-Ma’arikh*
Mantua	Mantua edition of the *Zohar*
Mat	*Matnitin*
MhN	*Midrash ha-Ne’lam*
MM	Shalom Buzaglo, *Miqdash Melekh*
MmD	Daniel Frisch, *Peirush Matoq mi-Devash*
MS (plural, MSS)	manuscript(s)
Ms5	MS Guenzburg 293, Russian State Library, Moscow

n. (plural, nn.)	note (s)
N6	MS 1614, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
N37	MS 1918, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
N38	MS 1927, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
N41	MS 1930, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
N47	MS 2076, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
n.d.	no date
Nefesh David	David Luria, *Nefesh David*
NO	Ḥayyim Joseph David Azulai, *Nitsotsei Orot*
n.p.	no publisher
NZ	Reuven Margaliot, *Nitsotsei Zohar*
O2	MS 1564, Bodleian Library, Oxford
O3	MS 1884, Bodleian Library, Oxford
O17	MS 2514, Bodleian Library, Oxford
OḤ	Abraham Azulai, ed., Or *ha-Ḥammah*
OY	Moses Cordovero, Or *Yaqar*
P2	MS héb. 779, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
par.	paragraph
Pereq Shirah	Malachi Beit-Arié, ed., *Pereq Shirah*
Piq	*Piqqudin*
pl.	plural
QhM	*Qav ha-Middah*
R14	MS 2971, Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome
RM	*Ra'aya Meheimna*
RR	*Raza de-Razin*
Scholem	Gershom Scholem, *Sefer ha-Zohar shel*

	Gershom Scholem
SdTs	*Sifra di-Tsni'uta*
ShS	*Shir ha-Shirim*
SO	*Sitrei Otiyyot*
Soncino	Harry Sperling et al., trans., *The Zohar* (Soncino Press)
ST	*Sitrei Torah*
Sullam	Yehudah Ashlag, *Sefer ha-Zohar…im… ha-Sullam*
T1	MS Friedberg 5-015, University of Toronto Library
Tiq	*Tiqqunim* (in *Zohar Ḥadash*)
Tos	*Tosefta*
trans.	translator(s); translated by
TZ	*Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*
V1	MS ebr. 68, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V3	MS ebr. 199, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V5	MS ebr. 206, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V7	MS ebr. 208, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V8	MS ebr. 212, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V16	MS Neofiti 23, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
Vital	Ḥayyim Vital, in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, ed. Abraham Azulai
Yahel Or	Elijah ben Solomon of Vilna, *Yahel Or*
Z2	MS Heidelberg 83, Zentralbibliothek, Zurich
ZḤ	*Zohar Ḥadash*
Zohorei Ya'bets	Jacob Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*

Transliteration of Hebrew and Aramaic

א	*alef*	’[1]	ל	*lamed*	*l*
בּ	*bet*	*b*	מ	*mem*	*m*
ב	*vet*	*v*	נ	*nun*	*n*
ג	*gimel*	*g*	ס	*samekh*	*s*
ד	*dalet*	*d*	ע	*ayin*	’[2]
ה	*he*	*h*	פּ	*pe*	*p*
ו	*vav*	*v*	פ	*phe*	*f*[3]
ז	*zayin*	*z*	צ	*tsadi*	*ts*
ח	*ḥet*	*ḥ*	ק	*qof*	*q*
ט	*tet*	*t*	ר	*resh*	*r*
י	*yod*	*y, i*	שׁ	*shin*	*sh*
כּ	*kaf*	*k*	שׂ	*sin*	*s*
כ	*khaf*	*kh*	ת	*tav*	*t*

The English equivalent letter is doubled when a strong *dagesh* in Hebrew or Aramaic characterizes a verbal conjugation or indicates an assimilated letter, e.g., *dibber, yitten*. The English letter is not doubled when preceded by a hyphenated prefix, e.g., *ha-sefer, la-melekh, mi-tokh*.

Proper names that appear in roman type do not follow the above schema. Biblical names are rendered according to the *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh*. Rabbinic names are rendered according to common convention, e.g., Akiva, Resh Lakish. Medieval names are Anglicized, e.g., Moses de León, Joseph Gikatilla. Authors’ names in the Bibliography follow library listings or the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*.

1. *Alef* is not transliterated at the beginning or end of a word nor after a hyphenated prefix. Elsewhere it is transliterated only when accompanied by a vowel, e.g., *Shemu'el*.

2. *Ayin* is not transliterated at the beginning of a word, nor after a hyphenated prefix, nor, unless accompanied by a vowel, at the end of a word.

3. Occasionally transliterated as *ph* to compare or contrast it to the letter *pe*.

Glossary

aggadah "Tale"; the nonlegal contents of the Talmud and Midrash, often based on biblical exegesis. It includes ethical and moral teaching, theological speculation, legends, and folklore.

alef The first letter of the Hebrew alphabet; the beginning of divine and human speech.

Amidah "Standing"; the central prayer, recited three times daily.

amora, pl. ***amora'im*** "Speaker, interpreter"; a teacher living in the three centuries or so following the compilation of the Mishnah (ca. 200 C.E.) and whose opinions are recorded in subsequent rabbinic literature.

Assembly of Israel Hebrew, כנסת ישראל (*Keneset Yisra'el*); in rabbinic literature, a phrase normally denoting the people of Israel. In the *Zohar*, the phrase can refer to the earthly community of Israel but also (often primarily) to *Shekhinah*, the divine feminine counterpart of the people.

Ayin "Nothingness"; the creative "no-thingness" of God, out of which all being emanates.

Binah "Understanding"; the third *sefirah*; the Divine Mother who gives birth to the seven lower *sefirot*.

blessed Holy One Common rabbinic name for God. In the *Zohar* it often designates *Tif'eret*.

Din "Judgment"; the fifth *sefirah*; the left arm of the divine body, balancing *Ḥesed*. The roots of evil lie here; also called *Gevurah*.

Eikhah The book of Lamentations.

Ein Sof “There is no end”; that which is boundless; the Infinite. The ultimate reality of God beyond all specific qualities of the *sefirot*; the God beyond God.

Elohim “God, gods”; a biblical name for God. In the *Zohar* it has various sefirotic associations: *Binah, Gevurah, Shekhinah*.

Gedullah “Greatness”; the fourth *sefirah*; the outpouring of God’s great goodness; also called *Ḥesed*.

Gevurah “Power”; the fifth *sefirah*; also called *Din*.

gimatriyya Derived from the Greek *geometria* (“measuring the earth”); a method of interpretation based on the numerical value of Hebrew letters.

halakhah “Practice, law,” from the root הלך (*hlkh*), “to walk”: the way that one should follow.

Hashmatot “Omissions”; additions printed at the end of each of the three standard Aramaic volumes of the *Zohar*, drawn from the Cremona edition and *Zohar Ḥadash*.

ḥasid, pl. ***ḥasidim*** “Pious one,” devotee, saint, lover of God.

havdalah “Differentiation”; prayer recited at the conclusion of Sabbath and festivals to indicate the distinction between the sacred day that has ended and the weekday that is beginning.

Heikhalot “Palaces”; descriptions of the heavenly palaces in *Zohar* 1:38a–45b; 2:244b–268b.

Ḥesed “Loving-kindness, love, grace”; the fourth *sefirah*; the right arm of the divine body, balancing *Din*; also called *Gedullah*.

Hod “Splendor”; the eighth *sefirah*; the left leg of the divine body; source of prophecy along with *Netsaḥ*.

Ḥokhmah “Wisdom”; the second *sefirah*; the primordial point of emanation.

Holy Ancient One The most ancient manifestation of *Ein Sof* through *Keter*, Its crown.

idra “Threshing place,” assembly.

Idra Rabba "The Great Assembly"; a description of the gathering of Rabbi Shim'on and the Companions at the threshing house, where profound mysteries of divine being are expounded. *Zohar* 3:127b–145a.

Idra Zuta "The Small Assembly"; a description of the last gathering of Rabbi Shim'on and the Companions, the master's final teachings, and his ecstatic death. *Zohar* 3:287b–296b.

Israel Often, the people of Israel.

Kabbalah Hebrew, קבלה (*qabbalah*), "receiving, that which is received, tradition"; originally referring to tradition in general (or to post-Mosaic Scripture), but from the thirteenth century onward, specifically to the esoteric teachings of Judaism.

Keter "Crown"; the first *sefirah*; coeternal with *Ein Sof*; also called *Ratson* ("Will") and *Ayin* ("Nothingness").

Lilith A demoness who harms babies and seduces men; married to Samael.

Malkhut "Kingdom"; the tenth *sefirah*, ruling the lower worlds; also called *Shekhinah*.

Matnitin "Our Mishnah"; short pieces scattered throughout the *Zohar*, most of which appear as utterances of a heavenly voice urging the Companions to arouse themselves and open their hearts to the mysteries. Some of them contain principles of kabbalistic teaching in a condensed form, constituting a kind of mystical Mishnah, expounded in the main section of the *Zohar*.

Matronita Aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron, married woman, noble lady," often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the wife of *Tif'eret*.

mezuzah "Doorpost"; small parchment on which are inscribed the first two paragraphs of the *Shema*. The parchment is rolled tightly, placed in a small case, and affixed to the doorposts in the home.

midrash, pl. midrashim Homiletical or legal interpretation of the Bible.

Midrash ha-Ne'lam "The Concealed Midrash, the Esoteric Midrash"; an early stratum of the *Zohar*. Its language is a mixture of Hebrew and Aramaic. *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* on the Torah pertains to several portions of Genesis, the beginning of Exodus, and several other portions; it is printed partly alongside the main text of the *Zohar* and partly in *Zohar Ḥadash*. *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* on Song of Songs, Ruth, and Lamentations is printed in *Zohar Ḥadash*. The subject matter of *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* is mostly Creation, the soul, and the world to come; its style is often allegorical.

minḥah "Offering"; second of the three daily prayer services, recited in the afternoon.

Mishnah Collection of oral teachings compiled near the beginning of the third century by Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi; the earliest codification of Jewish Oral Law; the core of the Talmud.

mitsvah, pl. ***mitsvot*** "Commandment"; one of the 613 commandments of the Torah or one of various rabbinic precepts; religious duty; by extension, good deed.

musaf "Supplement"; the additional Sabbath and festival worship service, usually recited immediately after the morning service.

nefesh "Soul," life force; the basic level of the soul, animating the human being. (The other two levels are *ruaḥ* and *neshamah*.)

neshamah "Breath, soul," soul-breath; the highest level of the soul. (The other two levels are *nefesh* and *ruaḥ*)

Netsaḥ "Endurance"; the seventh *sefirah;* the right leg of the divine body; source of prophecy along with *Hod*.

Oral Torah The rabbinic interpretation of the Written Torah (the Five Books of Moses); in Kabbalah, a symbol of *Shekhinah*.

Other Side Aramaic, סטרא אחרא (*Sitra Aḥra*); the demonic realm, shadow of the divine.

parashah “Portion”; portion of the Torah read on a particular Sabbath, named after its opening word (or phrase) or a key word (or phrase) in the opening sentence.

Piqqudin “Commandments”; kabbalistic interpretations of the commandments scattered throughout the *Zohar* (to be distinguished from *Ra’aya Meheimna*).

Qav ha-Middah “The Standard of Measure”; a detailed description of the process of divine emanation, delivered by Rabbi Shim’on. *Zohar Ḥadash* 56d–58d.

Qiddush “Sanctification”; a ceremony and prayer proclaiming the holiness of Sabbath or a festival. The *Qiddush* is recited on the Sabbath or festival eve over a cup of wine immediately before the meal.

Ra’aya Meheimna “The Faithful Shepherd”; a separate composition on the kabbalistic meaning of the commandments, printed piecemeal in the *Zohar*. Here Moses, the Faithful Shepherd, appears to Rabbi Shim’on and the Companions, revealing secrets.

Raḥamim “Compassion”; the sixth *sefirah*, harmonizing the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Din*; also called *Tif’eret*.

Raza de-Razin “The Secret of Secrets”; a separate section dealing with physiognomy, metoposcopy, and chiromancy (*Zohar* 2:70a–75a, *Zohar Ḥadash* 35b–37c). A second version is incorporated into the main body of the *Zohar* (2:70a–78a).

Rosh Hashanah The Jewish New Year, celebrated on the first two days of the Hebrew month Tishrei.

ruaḥ “Spirit, wind, breath”; the second level of soul. (The other two levels are *nefesh* and *neshamah*.)

Rut The book of Ruth.

Samael Prince of demons, married to Lilith; identical with Satan.

Sava “The Elder.”

Sava de-Mishpatim “The Old Man of [Torah portion] *Mishpatim*”; an account of the Companions’ encounter with

a donkey-driver who turns out to be a master of wisdom. *Zohar* 2:94b–114a.

Sefer ha-Zohar "The Book of Radiance."

sefirah, pl. ***sefirot*** Literally, "counting," number, numerical entity; in Kabbalah, one of the ten aspects of divine personality, nine of which emanate from *Ein Sof* and the first *sefirah, Keter*. See the diagram on page ix.

Shaddai An obscure divine name, which may originally have meant "[God of] the mountain." In Kabbalah it often denotes *Shekhinah*.

Shekhinah "Presence," divine immanence; the tenth and last *sefirah*; female partner of *Tif'eret*; also called *Malkhut*.

Shema Literally, "hear"; central prayer recited morning and evening, comprising Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21; and Numbers 15:37–41. The opening verse is: *Hear O Israel! YHVH our God, YHVH is one!*

Shir ha-Shirim The book of Song of Songs.

Sifra di-Tsni'uta "Book of Concealment"; an anonymous, highly condensed commentary on the beginning of the Torah in short, obscure sentences, divided into five chapters. Its subject is the mysteries of divine being. *Zohar* 2:176b–179a.

Sitrei Otiyyot "Secrets of the Letters"; a discourse by Rabbi Shim'on focusing on the letters of the divine name *YHVH* and how they symbolize the process of emanation. *Zohar Ḥadash* 1b–7b.

Sitrei Torah "Secrets of Torah"; interpretations of certain verses of Genesis, printed in separate columns parallel to the main body of the *Zohar* and in *Zohar Ḥadash*. It includes allegorical explanations of the mysteries of the soul.

Talmud Each of the two compilations of Jewish law, legend, ethics, and theology comprising the Mishnah and its vast commentary (the Gemara) by rabbis of the third through fifth centuries. The Jerusalem Talmud was

compiled ca. 400 C.E.; the Babylonian Talmud, about one hundred years later.

tanna, pl. ***tanna'im*** "One who repeats, teacher"; an authority cited in the Mishnah or belonging to the Mishnaic period (first two centuries of the Common Era); an Amoraic scholar whose task was to memorize and recite tannaitic texts.

Targum "Translation"; an Aramaic translation of the Torah or the Bible.

tav The last letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

tefillin "Phylacteries"; two black leather boxes containing passages from the Torah (Exodus 13:1–10, 11–16; Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21) written on parchment. They are bound by black leather straps on the left arm and on the head, and are prescribed for men to wear during weekday morning prayer. Each of the biblical passages indicates that the Children of Israel should place a sign upon their hand and a frontlet (or reminder) between their eyes.

Tif'eret "Beauty, glory"; the sixth *sefirah*, harmonizing the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Din*; male partner of *Shekhinah*; the torso of the divine body; also called *Raḥamim*.

Tiqqunei ha-Zohar "Embellishments on the *Zohar*"; an independent book whose setting is similar to *Ra'aya Meheimna*. It comprises a commentary on the beginning of Genesis, each *tiqqun* opening with a new interpretation of the word בראשית (*be-reshit*), "in the beginning."

Tiqqunim "Embellishments"; additional material in the genre of *Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*, printed in *Zohar Ḥadash* 93c–122b.

Torah "Instruction, teaching"; the Five Books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy); by extension, the entire corpus of Jewish religious literature.

Tosefta "Addenda"; in rabbinic literature, a collection of precepts parallel to and contemporary with the Mishnah.

In the *Zohar*, a collection similar to *Matnitin*.

Tsaddiq “Righteous One”; a name for *Yesod*, the ninth *sefirah*.

tzitzit “Tassels” on the hem of a garment, and later on a prayer shawl. See Numbers 15:37–41.

world that is coming Hebrew, העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*); Aramaic, עלמא דאתי (*alma de-atei*); often understood as referring to the hereafter and usually translated as “the world to come.” From another perspective, however, “the world that is coming” already exists—occupying another, timeless dimension. In Kabbalah this phrase often refers to *Binah*, the continuous source of emanation, who “is constantly coming, never ceasing.”

Written Torah The Five Books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy); in Kabbalah, a symbol of *Tiferet*.

Yah A contracted biblical form of the divine name *YHVH*.

Yesod “Foundation”; the ninth *sefirah*, who channels the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah*; the phallus of the divine body; also called *Tsaddiq*.

YHVH The ineffable name of God, apparently deriving from the root הוה (*hvh*), “to be.” In the *Zohar* it often symbolizes *Tif’eret*.

Yom Kippur The Day of Atonement, observed on the tenth of the Hebrew month Tishrei.

zohar “Radiance, splendor.”

Zohar Ḥadash “New Zohar”; a collection of Zoharic texts not included in the early editions of the *Zohar*. It was first printed in Salonika in 1597. The title is misleading since *Zohar Ḥadash* contains much of *Midrash ha-Ne’lam*, an early stratum of the *Zohar*.

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1. For a list of eighty-four *Zohar* manuscripts, see Rubin, “Mif’al ha-Zohar,” 172–73.

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OTHER

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1. ***The enlightened*—those who contemplate…** In the book of Daniel this term apparently designates the community of those who shared the prophet's vision. In medieval literature it can refer to either philosophers or, as here, to kabbalists.

See *Bahir* 95 (139); *Zohar* 1:15a–16a; 2:23a; *ZḤ* 58c (*QhM*), 93d–94b (*Tiq*), 105a (*Tiq*), 105c (*Tiq*), 106b (*Tiq*); Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 224; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 379, 383–84; Liebes, "Zohar ve-Eros," 73–75.

2. **supernal Wisdom** The *sefirah* of *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom). See *Zohar* 2:61b–62a.

3. זהר **(*zohar*), *radiance*…** This word designates the potency of emanation and provides the title of the book.

The image of "the river issuing from Eden" derives from Genesis 2:10: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden*…. In Kabbalah this sparkling river symbolizes the flow of emanation issuing from *Ḥokhmah*, conveyed by *Binah* through *Yesod*, entering the garden of *Shekhinah*.

On the term *zohar*, see *Zohar* 1:15a–16a, 100a (*ST*); 3:124b, 153b (*RM*); Liebes, "Zohar ve-Eros," 73–86.

4. הרקיע **(*ha-raqi'a*), the expanse…** Or "the sky, firmament." See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, in the name of Resh Lakish: "There are seven [heavens]…. In the one called *raqi'a*, sun, moon, stars, and constellations are set."

Here the *raqi'a* symbolizes the "expanse" of *Binah*, extending to *Yesod*. "Sun and moon" often symbolize the divine couple, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. "Lamps of light" refers to the various *sefirot* generated by *Binah*.

See *Zohar* 1:8b, 17a–b, 34a, 162b; 2:246a. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*.

5. **illumines the garden…** The sefirotic expanse illumines *Shekhinah*, who unites with *Tif'eret*, symbolized by the Tree of Life. The garden of *Shekhinah* sprouts souls ("forms, trees, and spices"), who are robed in garments befitting

their virtue. Angels (“beasts… birds”) find shelter beneath the cosmic tree.

On the Tree of Life in the middle of the garden, see Genesis 2:9 and *Targum Onqelos*, ad loc. On the soul’s garments, see *Zohar* 1:224a; Vol. 3, p. 347, n. 249; below, note 211. The description of the beasts and birds derives from Daniel’s vision of the cosmic tree (Daniel 4:9).

6. **Other Side…** סטרא אחרא (*Sitra Aḥra*), the demonic realm, shadow of the divine.

7. **This tree rises…** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 15:6: “Rabbi Yehudah son of Rabbi Il’ai said, ‘The Tree of Life extends over a journey of five hundred years, and all the waters of Creation branch off beneath it.’” See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 2:9.

Here the five hundred units symbolize the five *sefirot* encompassed by the cosmic tree, *Tif’eret* (*Ḥesed, Gevurah, Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*). (Alternatively, they symbolize the five *sefirot* included in *Yesod*: *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif’eret, Netsaḥ*, and *Hod*.) The number six hundred thousand symbolizes all six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. (The Greek parasang equals about 3.5 modern miles.)

See *Zohar* 1:18a, 35a, 76b (*ST*), 78b (*ST*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 56 (69).

8. **radiance that does not shine…** *Shekhinah*, who has no light of Her own, only what She receives from the higher *sefirot*.

9. **twelve tribes, bounded there…** The twelve sons of Jacob (or Israel)—progenitors of the twelve tribes—symbolize twelve spiritual potencies issuing from the cosmic tree of *Tif’eret*, whose full name is *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel). When Jacob’s sons descended into the exile of Egypt, they were accompanied by *Shekhinah* (“radiance that does not shine”), who was Herself surrounded by camps of angels.

On the twelve potencies, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1; *Bahir* 64 (95); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 511–12;

Zohar 1:183b, 199a; 2:229b; 3:78a, 118b; Liebes, *Torat ha-Yetsirah shel Sefer Yetsirah*, 25.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see BT *Megillah* 29a: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai says, 'Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of the blessed Holy One! Wherever they went in exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them.... When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them.... And even when they are destined to be redeemed, *Shekhinah* will be with them.'"

See below, note 15; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 73–74 (92–93); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:382–85.

10. **היה היה (*Hayoh hayah*), *Happening it happened...*** This phrase combines the infinitive and finite forms of the verb "to be." It can be rendered simply *It happened*, but Rabbi Shim'on focuses on the double form. The full verse reads: *Happening it happened that the word of YHVH came to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Kevar. There the hand of YHVH came upon him*.

See *Zohar* 1:85a, 149a; 2:5a (*MhN*), 82a–b; *ZḤ* 38a. Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58–59. Cf. *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1; BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 25a.

11. **Ezekiel was a faithful prophet...** His graphic description of prophetic vision was sanctioned by God. The unusual phrase *happening it happened* indicates a unique event due to an emergency: the stunned people of Israel, exiled in Babylon, had to be comforted and reassured.

See the sources cited in the preceding note; and *ZḤ* 37c.

12. **all the days of that virtuous one...** Their ancestor Jacob had endured much suffering, including the enmity of Esau, laboring many years for Laban, the rape of Dinah his daughter, and the disappearance of Joseph. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 84:3.

13. ***Erelim…*** Biblical Hebrew אראלם (*er'ellam*), a word whose form and meaning are dubious. In the verse in Isaiah, it has sometimes been translated: "their valiant ones, their brave men," referring to the Judeans withstanding Sennacherib's onslaught. See Isaiah 29:1–2; *ABD*, s.v. "Ariel."

In rabbinic tradition the word אראלם (*er'ellam*) is transformed into אראלים (*er'ellim*), meaning "angels" or a group of angels, while in medieval angelology they constitute one of ten such classes. Here, the Erelim and other angels mourn the destruction of the Temple and the people's exile.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 56:5; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:23; BT *Ḥagigah* 5b, *Ketubbot* 104a; *Midrash Aggadah*, Exodus 33:22; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:7; *Zohar* 1:182a, 210a; 2:43b, 196a, 250b; *Orḥot Tsaddiqim*, 26; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:23, n. 64; 5:417, n. 117.

14. ***By the rivers of Babylon…*** The verse concludes: *when we remembered Zion*.

The verse in Lamentations concludes: *how are they reckoned as earthen jars, work of a potter's hands!*

On the description "with millstones on their necks, their hands bound tightly behind," see Lamentations 5:13; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; ibid. 2:6; 5:13; *Zohar* 2:118b (*RM*); 3:20b. On the Babylonian exiles' sense of abandonment, see BT *Sanhedrin* 105a.

15. **blessed Holy One summoned His entire household…** The angels of heaven. See Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58; *Zohar* 2:82b, 196a.

The verse in Isaiah reads: *Thus says YHVH, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "For your sake* שלחתי (*shillaḥti*), *I send, to Babylon; I will bring down all bars."* Here, based on a radical midrash, Rabbi Shim'on revocalizes שלחתי (*shillaḥti*), *I send*, as שולחתי (*shullaḥti*), *I was*

sent, indicating that God exiled Himself (or Herself) along with Israel.

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "Wherever Israel went in exile, *Shekhinah*, as it were, went into exile with them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them.... When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them, as is said: *For your sake* שולחתי (*shullaḥti*), *I was sent, to Babylon....* And when in the future they return, *Shekhinah*, as it were, will return with them...."

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 84; JT *Ta'anit* 1:1, 64a; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:54; BT *Megillah* 29a (above, note 9). In the verse from Isaiah, the simple sense of *bars* is apparently "prison bars," while here they are taken to refer to the components of heavenly chariots, which descended to Babylon along with camps of angels.

16. ***And I saw...And I saw...*** This formula appears three times in Ezekiel's vision (Ezekiel 1:4, 15, 27).

On the sentence "If he had revealed even more...," see *Zohar* 2:5a (*MhN*).

17. **Wherever Israel went in exile...** See above, note 15.

Rabbi Shim'on wonders why the opening verse of Exodus mentions both of Jacob's names: *Israel* and then *Jacob*. The verse could have read: *These are the names of the sons of Israel who came with him to Egypt*. He explains that here *the sons of Israel* refers to angels who descended *with Jacob*, together with *Shekhinah*, when the patriarch went down to Egypt.

See above, note 9; *Zohar* 2:4a, 4b–5a (*MhN*). On the link between the name Jacob and *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:145b, 147b–148b (*ST*), 174a, 176a, 177b, 210b; 3:210b.

18. **Assembly of Israel** כנסת ישראל (*Keneset Yisra'el*). In rabbinic Hebrew this phrase normally denotes the people of Israel. The midrash on the Song of Songs describes an allegorical love affair between the maiden (the earthly

assembly of Israel) and her lover ("the Holy One, blessed be He"). In the *Zohar,* *Keneset Yisra'el* can refer to the earthly community but also (often primarily) to *Shekhinah*, the divine feminine counterpart of the people, the aspect of God most intimately connected with them. The lovers in the Song of Songs are pictured as the divine couple *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

19. ***from Lebanon*—from that supernal delight...** *Shekhinah* derives from *Ḥokhmah*, which is symbolized by Lebanon and also known as "delight."

20. **כלה (*Kallah*), *Bride*—consummate...** Linking כלה (*kallah*), "bride," with the root כלל (*kll*), "to complete, make perfect," or the root כלה (*klh*), "to be completed." *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the moon, is illumined and fulfilled by the radiance of *Tif'eret* (the sun).

21. **תשורי (*Tashuri*), *Descend*...תשורה (*teshurah*), *gift*...** This play on words enables Rabbi Ḥiyya to understand the verse in Song of Songs as (*Receive*) *a gift from the peak of Amana*—from the beginning of Israel's entry into the realm of faith, as explained below. See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:8.

22. **from the beginning, of their entry...** At Mount Sinai, Israel demonstrated true faith by declaring נעשה ונשמע (*na'aseh venishma*), *we will do and we will heed* [or: *listen*]—thereby committing themselves to fulfill and enact God's word even before hearing the details. This pure act made them equivalent to the angels, who *fulfill* (or "do, perform") *His word* even before *heeding* (or "listening to") it.

See *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 24:7; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 320; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 2:4; BT *Shabbat* 88a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:5, 12; 2:1–3; 3:9; 4:9; 5:2; 6:5.

The "gift" may refer to the Torah itself or to the present described in BT *Shabbat* 88a: "Rabbi Simai expounded: 'When Israel said *We will do* before *We will listen*, 600,000 ministering angels came to each and every Israelite, setting two crowns upon him, one for *We will do*, and one for *We will listen*. As soon as Israel sinned [by worshiping the

Golden Calf], 1,200,000 angels of destruction descended and removed them.’”

For other interpretations of the “gift,” see *Zohar* 3:192b–193a; *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *MmD*. On the play on the homonyms אמנה (*amanah*), “Amana,” and אמנה (*amanah*), “faith,” see *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beshallaḥ* 11; *Shemot Rabbah* 23:5.

23. ***Senir and Hermon*—Mount Sinai…** See *Midrash Tehillim* 42:5; *MM*; *MmD*.

24. **children of Seir… children of Ishmael…** According to rabbinic tradition, before giving the Torah to Israel, God offered it to the other nations, including Edom (who dwelled in Seir) and Ishmael (who dwelled in Paran). However, they refused to accept its moral constraints.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 5; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 343; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 33:2; BT *Avodah Zarah* 2b; *Tanḥuma, Vezot Haberakhah* 4; *Shemot Rabbah* 27:9; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 41; *Zohar* 3:192a–193a.

25. ***myriads of holy ones…*** Myriads of angels contended that God’s *splendor* (His Torah) should be given to them *above the heavens*, not to human beings on earth. God, however, demonstrated to them that the Torah is intended for mortals who are vulnerable to sin and who need laws and regulations. Finally convinced that Torah is inappropriate for heavenly creatures, the angels repeated the verse in the psalm, but this time without the conclusion that states *You have set Your splendor above the heavens*. Then, God *came from myriads of holy ones* and gave the Torah to Israel.

See BT *Shabbat* 88b–89a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:11; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, 25; *Midrash Tehillim* 8:2.

26. **Rabbi Yose established this verse…** The verse in Song of Songs 4:8: *With me from Lebanon, bride*…. According to Rabbi Yose, the blessed Holy One utters this verse to *Shekhinah*, His bride, asking Her to descend together with Him from *Ḥokhmah* (symbolized by *Lebanon*; see above, note 19) to participate in Israel’s exile in Egypt.

See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beshallaḥ* 11; *Zohar* 2:5b (*MhN*). On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, notes 9, 15.

27. **Rabbi Shim'on said...** He offers a different interpretation of the verse, applying it to the union of the divine couple: *Tif'eret* (symbolized by voice) and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by speech), both of whom derive *from Lebanon* (symbolizing *Ḥokhmah*). *Tif'eret* (voice) conducts *Shekhinah* (speech); the two are interdependent, both being essential to expressing the divine message and conveying emanation to the world. The primal voice of *Tif'eret*, not yet divided into syllables, is "general"; the articulated speech of *Shekhinah* is "particular." This reference to "general" and "particular" derives from a rabbinic hermeneutical rule concerning "a generalization that requires a specification" and "a specification that requires a generalization."

On voice and speech, see *Zohar* 1:36a, 145a–b, 246b; 2:25b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 335, 368–69; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 96. On the hermeneutical rule of "generalization and specification," see *Sifra*, intro, 9, 2b–c. Cf. *Zohar* 1:16b, 47b; 2:161b; 3:264a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 107–8; Vol. 1, p. 122, n. 105.

28. **larynx...** Symbolizing *Binah*, source of the breath, which often symbolizes *Tif'eret* and here conveys the voice (soon to be completed in speech). *Binah* Herself derives from *Ḥokhmah* (symbolized by Lebanon).

On *Binah* as larynx, see *Zohar* 1:50b, 74a. Rabbi Shim'on may be interpreting תשורי (*tashuri*), *descend*, as *receive* תשורה (*teshurah*), *a gift*. See above, note 21.

29. **tongue...teeth...lips...** All involved in the process of speech, which symbolizes the flow of emanation, consummating in *Shekhinah* (known as "speech").

See *Sefer Yetsirah* 2:3, where the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet are divided into five groups: gutturals (articulated with the throat), palatals (uttered with participation of the palate), linguals (uttered with

participation of the tongue), dentals (… with participation of the teeth), labials (… with participation of the lips).

See *Zohar* 1:80a (*ST*); 2:123a; 3:227b–228a (*RM*), 295b (*IZ*); *TZ*, intro, 13b; 19, 41b; 70, 132a–b. For sefirotic correspondences of these organs of the mouth, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *Sullam*.

30. ***one with an evil eye…*** רע עין (*Ra ayin*), an idiomatic expression meaning "stingy, resentful." Here, apparently, Rabbi Ḥiyya combines the literal and idiomatic senses. Because Israel ate the food of the Egyptians, who were associated with the demonic evil eye, they suffered slavery and exile.

On the verse in Proverbs, see BT *Sotah* 38b; *Zohar* 1:144a; 3:104a, 147b, 206b.

31. **decree was issued** God had already decreed to Abraham that his descendants would be enslaved. See Genesis 15:13: *He said to Abram, "Know well that your seed will be strangers in a land not theirs, and they will be enslaved and afflicted four hundred years*."

32. **All is fitting…** The decree did not specify that Abraham's descendants would be enslaved in Egypt, but simply *in a land not theirs*—which could refer to any land. It was only because the Israelites ate from the food of the Egyptians that they suffered Egyptian bondage.

See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 6:5, and Rabad, ad loc.; Naḥmanides on Genesis 15:14.

33. **who follows his intestines…** Who constantly craves food. See Proverbs 23:2: *Put a knife to your throat if you have a large appetite*.

34. ***abhorrent to Egypt…*** Due to the Egyptians' demonic stinginess, they loathed breaking bread with the Israelites.

35. **three who thrust *Shekhinah* away…** See BT *Ḥagigah* 16a, in the name of Rabbi Yitsḥak: "Whoever sins secretly, it is as if he thrusts away [or: squeezes] the feet of *Shekhinah*." See *Zohar* 1:152b, 174b. Cf. 3:75b.

The concluding sentence of this paragraph means that those who cry out for compassion (even the innocent) are not heard because of the widespread wickedness.

The following harsh critique of sexual sins reflects the social reality of Jewish life in thirteenth-century Castile. See Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 51–54 (63–67); Baer, "Todros ben Yehudah ha-Levi u-Zmano," 31–44; idem, *History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:250–63; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1371–72; Assis, "Sexual Behavior in Mediaeval Hispano-Jewish Society"; Scholem; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 51.

36. **no defilement… as potent as… menstruation…** See Leviticus 15:19–24. On the menstruant and on the fear of menstrual blood as a repository of demonic forces, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:948–53. On the *Zohar*'s strict attitude, see Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 32.

37. **inflicts severe illness…** If a man has sexual relations with a menstruant, both he and the child engendered by this forbidden act will be tainted by impurity and will suffer.

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 15:5; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 344–45. The subject of "all his days he will dwell… his formation…" is the child. The verse in Leviticus reads: *If a man in fact lies with her, her menstrual impurity will be upon him*.

38. **inserting the covenant… into another domain…** Inserting the covenantal sign of circumcision into the body of a non-Jewish woman.

See BT *Eruvin* 19a; *Zohar* 1:93a, 131b; 2:7a, 57b, 87b; 3:57b, 142a (*IR*), 266a. The full verse in Malachi reads: *Judah has broken faith; an abhorrent act has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has desecrated the sanctuary of YHVH, which He loves, and has married the daughter of an alien god*.

39. **no jealousy except for the holy covenant…** God becomes incensed if the covenant of circumcision is

betrayed by sexual sin. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 26:5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:9; *Zohar* 1:240b; *ZḤ* 78c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 213.

In rabbinic literature, the mark of circumcision is identified with the י (*yod*) of the divine name שדי (*Shaddai*), which is also the initial letter of יהוה (*YHVH*). See *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 14, *Shemini* 8; *Zohar* 1:13a, 56a, 60a, 89a, 93a, 95a–b; 2:36a, 87b, 216b; 3:13b, 142a (*IR*), 215b, 220a, 256a (*RM*), 266a; Wolfson, "Circumcision and the Divine Name"; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 29–48.

40. **knew and did not stop them…** See *Tanḥuma, Balaq* 19; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Balaq* 28; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 20:23.

41. **covenant, called *sun… and shield…*** *Yesod*, the divine phallus and site of the covenant, is symbolized by *sun* and *shield*. According to Rabbi Abba, the leaders were impaled *facing the sun* because they had failed to prevent the violation of the covenant.

See *Zohar* 3:217a. The verse in Psalms reads: *For YHVH Elohim is sun and shield*.

42. **leaders of the people will be seized…** They will be punished for having failed to prevent such sins. This sentence probably alludes to the execution of a number of prominent Jewish courtiers by the command of King Alfonso X of Castile; their executions were interpreted as punishment for their failures of moral leadership.

See Baer, *History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:257; above, note 35; Scholem.

43. ***You shall not bow to them…*** In the *Zohar*, the prohibition against bowing down to another god includes a warning not to lie down with a foreign woman. Both are acts of betrayal, arousing the same divine jealousy.

See *Zohar* 1:131b, 189b; 2:61a, 87b, 90a, 243a; 3:13b; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*), 78c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 212–13; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 51 (63); above, note 39. Cf. *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21; below, p. 513 and n. 536.

44. ***The Children of Israel abandoned…*** A conflation and paraphrase of several biblical verses. See Judges 2:12–14; 10:6–7; 1 Samuel 12:9; *Zohar* 1:32a–b, 93b; 3:42b.

45. **circumcising but not uncovering…** They failed to perform the second stage of the ritual of circumcision. First the foreskin is cut and removed, disclosing the mucous membrane, which is then torn down the center and pulled back, revealing the corona. The act of tearing and pulling back the membrane is called פריעה (*peri'ah*), "uncovering" the corona. See M *Shabbat* 19:6: "If one circumcises but does not uncover the circumcision, it is as if he has not circumcised."

The prophetess Deborah renewed Israel's commitment to complete the ritual of circumcision by performing *peri'ah*. Literally, the phrase בפרוע פרעות (*biphro'a pera'ot*) apparently means *when locks go untrimmed*, an expression of dedication (see Numbers 6:5); but here Rabbi Yose intends another meaning of the root: "to uncover," namely, to enact *peri'ah*.

See *Zohar* 1:13a, 32a (*Tos*), 32a–b, 93b, 96b, 98b (*ST*), 238b; 2:40a, 57b, 60b, 125b; 3:91b, 95b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 133; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (67).

46. **One who kills his children…** By performing or causing an abortion.

On the fetus as being formed by God, see BT *Berakhot* 10a. According to many rabbinic authorities, abortion is forbidden unless the fetus poses an immediate threat to the physical and mental health of the mother. See M *Oholot* 7:6; Bleich, "Abortion in Halakhic Literature."

47. **structure of the King…** The fetus, formed by God. See the preceding note.

The act of abortion forces the soul of the fetus to wander—bodiless and restless.

48. **they guarded themselves…** The Israelites in Egypt did not sin sexually. Moreover, even though Pharaoh had commanded the Egyptians to kill every newborn

Israelite male, the Israelites devoted themselves to the divine command of procreation and never resorted to abortion or to killing any newborn themselves.

On the Israelites' devotion to procreation, see BT *Sotah* 11b; *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 9; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:12; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 15. On the link between Israel's sexual purity and their liberation from Egypt, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:5; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:12; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:28.

49. ***from the mirrors of the women…*** In the courtyard of the desert Tabernacle was a bronze basin in which the priests were required to wash their hands and feet before performing service. Expanding on a midrashic tradition, Rabbi Ḥiyya explains why this basin of purification was fashioned from the mirrors of Israelite women: in Egypt those women kept themselves separate from their husbands during their menstrual period, and after purifying themselves they aroused their partners to fulfill the command of procreation, despite Pharaoh's murderous decree.

See *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 9; Rashi and Naḥmanides on Exodus 38:8. The subject of the verse in Exodus is the artisan Bezalel.

50. ***tribes of Yah, a testimony to Israel… sons of Israel…*** All of these expressions attest to the purity of the Israelites' stock.

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:6.

51. ***He was the son of an Egyptian man…*** Indicating that, at least in this case, there were sexual relations between an Israelite and an Egyptian. However, this is the exception that proves the rule.

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:5; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:12; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:28; *Zohar* 3:105b. The context (Leviticus 24:10–11) reads: *The son of an Israelite woman—and he was the son of an Egyptian man—went out among the Children of*

Israel, and a fight broke out in the camp between the son of the Israelite woman and a certain Israelite man. The son of the Israelite woman invoked the Name, cursing it, and they brought him to Moses. His mother's name was Shelomith daughter of Dibri of the tribe of Dan.

52. ***The Children of Israel were fruitful…*** The full verse reads: *The Children of Israel were fruitful and swarmed and multiplied and became exceedingly numerous, and the land was filled with them.*

53. **careful about all of these…** About all three prohibitions (having sexual relations with a menstruant or a Gentile woman and aborting a fetus). They entered Egypt purely as Israelites and emerged the same.

On the Israelites' preserving their uniqueness in Egypt, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:5; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:12; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:28; *Zohar* 1:7a; 2:26b. The phrase בני ישראל (*benei yisra'el*) can be rendered *children* [or: *sons*] *of Israel*."

54. **Open your mouth and let your words shine** For this expression, see JT *Berakhot* 3:4, 6c; BT *Berakhot* 22a; *Zohar* 3:79a, 105b; *ZḤ* 37c, 67c (*ShS*), 70c (*ShS*), 73c (*ShS*).

55. **Holy Lamp** בוצינא קדישא (*Botsina Qaddisha*), the Zoharic title of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai, hero of the book and father of Rabbi El'azar. See *Zohar* 1:3b–4a, 156a, 197b, 217a; 2:31a, 123b; 3:171a; *ZḤ* 85d (*MhN, Rut*).

See 2 Samuel 21:17; *Bereshit Rabbah* 85:4; BT *Ketubbot* 17a, where Rabbi Abbahu is called בוצינא דנהורא (*Botsina di-Nhora*), "Lamp of Light"; and *Berakhot* 28b, where Rabban Yoḥanan son of Zakkai is called נר ישראל (*Ner Yisra'el*), "Lamp of Israel."

56. **Israel the Elder…** In midrashic literature this title refers to Israel the patriarch (Jacob), as opposed to the people Israel. Here, it designates *Tif'eret*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel). See *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:11; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 42–43 (51).

The sons of Israel refers to angels deriving from *Tif'eret*, who descended with Jacob into Egypt. See above, notes 9, 17; *Zohar* 2:4b–5a (*MhN*).

The opening verse of Exodus concludes with the clause *each man with his house* [or: *household*] *they came*. Rabbi Yose wonders how this image fits Rabbi Shim'on's interpretation.

57. **Whoever receives from another is a 'house'...** The receiver contains or "houses" what he has received. Thus, in this verset *each man* refers to each of the higher angels (deriving from *Tif'eret*), who emanate blessing to lower angels (deriving from *Shekhinah*), each of whom constitutes a *house*.

See *Zohar* 2:4b (*MhN*); *OY*; Galante. In rabbinic literature "house" can refer to a man's wife. See M *Yoma* 1:1.

58. ***the house of YHVH*—the Temple...** The Temple symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who receives or "houses" the emanation from *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*); the Holy of Holies symbolizes a more hidden realm, *Binah*.

59. ***The king*—anonymous...** This king, whose name is unspecified, is the concealed *sefirah* of *Binah*. In relation to the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, *Binah* is receptive and female, "housing" the supernal point. (The expression *the house of the king* is understood to mean "the house that is the king.") In relation to "the king below"—namely, *Malkhut* (Kingdom)—*Binah* is male, emanating the flow toward Her. All rungs of being follow this pattern of male and female.

On the expression "the *king*—anonymous," see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:11 (on 1:1): "Rabbi Yudan and Rabbi Levi said in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan, 'Wherever in this scroll [the Song of Songs] the expression *King Solomon* appears, the text speaks of King Solomon, whereas *the king*, anonymous, connotes the blessed Holy One.' The Rabbis say, 'Wherever *King Solomon* appears, the text speaks of the King to whom peace belongs [deriving שלמה (*Shelomoh*),

Solomon, from שלום (*shalom*), "peace"], whereas *the king*, anonymous, connotes the Assembly of Israel.'"

See *Ester Rabbah* 3:10; *Zohar* 1:29a–b, 84a; 2:127b, 164b; Vol. 1, p. 170, n. 500. On *Binah* as World of the Male, see *Zohar* 1:96a, 147a–b, 149a, 160b, 200a, 246a–247a, 248b; 2:101a, 105b, 127b, 165b; *ZḤ* 72b (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 343; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 23 (and Wolfson's note 6); idem, Commentary on the Ten *Sefirot*, 375b; Scholem, *Le-Ḥeqer Qabbalat R. Yitsḥaq ben Ya'aqov ha-Kohen*, 66–67. Cf. *Zohar* 1:5b, 17b, 46b, 163a.

60. **[5b]** The material from the 2:4a (middle) through 5b (bottom) belongs to *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* and *Matnitin*, and will be translated in a supplementary volume.

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:2, 105, n. 8; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 217.

61. ***You YHVH has chosen…*** The full verse reads: *For you are a people holy to YHVH your God, and you YHVH has chosen to be a treasured people to Him of all the peoples on the face of the earth*.

62. **they sow על (*al*), *above, all waters…*** In the verse in Isaiah the simple sense of the word על (*al*) is *by*, but here Rabbi Abba insists on the hyperliteral meaning *above*. Those who live virtuously draw emanation from *Binah* (the source of all that flows, who lies *above all waters*), thereby "sowing" and nurturing *Tif'eret*, who is known as *righteousness*.

See *Zohar* 2:64b. See BT *Bava Qamma* 17a, quoting Hosea 10:12: *Sow for yourselves righteousness*. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital; idem, *Haggahot Maharḥu*; Galante; *MM*.

63. ***Your love is high unto heaven… higher than heaven…*** One who sows righteousness draws *Ḥesed* (Love) to *Tif'eret* (who is known as *heaven*) from *Binah*, who is above *Tif'eret*: *higher than heaven*.

עלמא דאתי (*Alma de-atei*) is the Aramaic equivalent of the rabbinic Hebrew העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*), "the world that is

coming." This concept is often understood as referring to the hereafter and is usually translated as "the world to come." Alternatively, however, "the world that is coming" already exists, occupying another dimension. See *Tanḥuma, Vayiqra* 8: "The wise call it *ha-olam ha-ba* not because it does not exist now, but for us today in this world it is still to come." Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 8:8; and Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, 37: "'The world to come' does not succeed 'this world' in time, but exists from eternity as a reality outside and above time, to which the soul ascends."

In Kabbalah "the world that is coming" often refers to *Binah*, the continuous source of emanation, who gives birth to the lower *sefirot*. See *Zohar* 3:290b (*IZ*): "the world that is coming, constantly coming, never ceasing."

Cf. *Bahir* 106 (160); Asher ben David, *Peirush Shelosh Esreh Middot*, in *Kabbalah* 2 (1997), 293; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 26 (30); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot*, 375; *Zohar* 1:83a, 92a, 141b.

On the two verses in Psalms, see BT *Pesaḥim* 50b; *Zohar* 1:219a; cf. 3:16a.

64. **Book of Rav Yeiva Sava** Rav Yeiva the Elder, a minor figure in the Talmud, assumes a prominent role in the *Zohar*, culminating in *Sava de-Mishpatim* (2:94b–114a), where he appears as a donkey-driver who turns out to be a master of wisdom.

See BT *Pesaḥim* 103b, *Bava Qamma* 49b, *Ḥullin* 86b; *Zohar* 1:47b, 79b, 117b, 225a; 2:60b, 206b; 3:7b, 155b, 289a (*IZ*), 290a (*IZ*), 295a (*IZ*).

The *Zohar* frequently cites this book, one of the many volumes housed in a real or imaginary library. See Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 25; and the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, on *Zohar* 1:7a: "All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*… have been lost in the wanderings of exile…. Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned

in the *Zohar*." For a catalogue of these books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*.

65. ***This sentence by decree…*** The *watchers* and *holy ones* are angels, pictured here as members of a heavenly Sanhedrin (High Court) seated in the Palace of Merit.

The earthly Sanhedrin consisted of seventy-one members (seventy and the presiding officer). The number seventy-two may allude to seventy members plus two scribes. See M *Sanhedrin* 4:3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 24; Naḥmanides on Numbers 11:16; *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*), 229a; 2:251a (*Heikh*); 3:236b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 333 (and Wolfson's note).

On the Palace of Merit, see *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*); 2:248b (*Heikh*), 251a (*Heikh*). On pondering merits first, see M *Sanhedrin* 4:1; BT *Shabbat* 56a, 119a; *Ketubbot* 109b; *Qiddushin* 76b; *Sanhedrin* 43a.

66. **rung of that Other Side…** In the demonic realm, guilt overwhelms any possible merits.

On the Palace of Guilt, see *Zohar* 2:265a–266a (*Heikh*). The phrase *woman of whoredom* derives from Hosea 1:2 and refers here to Lilith, the female demon, wife of Samael. See *Zohar* 1:5a, 38b (*Heikh*), 148a (*ST*); 2:11a, 245a (*Heikh*).

67. **three are not found…** The granting or withholding of children, life, and sustenance does not depend on merit or guilt and is therefore not determined in either the Palace of Merit or the Palace of Guilt. Rather, such blessings derive from a higher realm, *above all waters*, namely from *Binah*. See above, note 62.

See BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 28a: "Rava said, 'Life, children, and sustenance do not depend on merit but on *mazzala*, destiny.'"

The word מזלא (*mazzala*) means "constellation, planet, planetary influence, zodiacal sign, destiny, fortune, guardian angel." In the *Zohar, mazzala* is associated with the

root נזל (*nzl*), “to flow,” and often refers to the flow of emanation from *Binah*.

See *Targum*, Ecclesiastes 9:2; Ibn Ezra on Job 28:1; *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*), 115a, 137a, 156b, 159b, 160b, 180b–181a, 198a, 207b; 2:178b (*SdTs*), 252b (*Heikh*); 3:25b, 77b, 134a (*IR*), 289a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*), 295b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 193 (and Wolfson’s note); idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 65 (82); Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 12a, 37a–b, 74a, 95a.

68. ***Who drive away…*** In this verse the idiomatic sense of משלחי (*meshalleḥei*) is *who let loose* (*the feet*), letting these animals range freely, but Rabbi Abba insists on the hyperliteral meaning, *who drive away*. Israel expels the demonic powers, symbolized by *ox* and *donkey*.

Ox derives from *Din* (harsh Judgment), while *donkey* represents a demonic force. If the two of them unite, they can ravage the world.

The subject of the clause “when they couple as one” is apparently the ox and the donkey, but it can also allude to Simeon and Levi, both of whom derive from *Din*. On their violent nature and combined threat, see Genesis 34; 49:5–7; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 37:19; *Bereshit Rabbah* 97:8 (on Genesis 49:8); 99:7; *Tanḥuma, Vayḥi* 9; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayeshev* 13; *Zohar* 1:172b–173a, 184a, 185b, 198b, 200b, 236a, 244a; 2:11a.

Further, Simeon is identified with the zodiacal sign of Taurus the bull (or ox). See *Midrash Tehillim* 90:3 (and Buber’s note 16); *Zohar* 1:173a, 200b, 236a.

The command in Deuteronomy against plowing with an ox and donkey is understood as a warning not to stimulate the union of the two dangerous forces. See *Zohar* 1:166b, 172b; 2:64b–65a; 3:86b, 207a.

Jacob’s message to Esau implied that he had mastered sorcery, but then he humbled himself before Esau by bowing seven times. See Genesis 33:3; *Zohar* 1:166b–167a; 2:64b.

69. **empowered only on account of Israel…** See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:5; BT *Ḥagigah* 13b; *Zohar* 2:16b–17a (*MhN*), 49a.

The Babylonians destroyed the first Temple in 586 B.C.E.; the Romans (symbolized by Edom) destroyed the second Temple in 70 C.E. Both of these cataclysms brought exile upon the Jews. (Edom also symbolizes medieval Christianity.)

70. ***out of a house of slaves…*** The verse reads: *I am YHVH your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of a house of slaves*. The word *slaves* obviously refers to those enslaved in Egypt, but here Rabbi Abba applies it to the Egyptians themselves, who were subservient.

71. **princely authority of Egypt was empowered…** The heavenly prince of Egypt was empowered, and consequently his nation dominated other peoples.

See *Zohar* 1:113a (*MhN*); 2:7a, 10a, 16b (*MhN*). Conversely, according to rabbinic literature, first a nation's heavenly prince is punished or cast down, and consequently his nation on earth. See below at note 80.

On the seventy heavenly princes, see Daniel 10:13, 20–21; Septuagint, Deuteronomy 32:8–9; Jubilees 15:31–32; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 11:8, Deuteronomy 32:8–9; *Tanḥuma, Re'eh* 8; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Genesis 9:19; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 24; *Zohar* 1:46b, 61a, 84b, 108b, 149b, 177a; 2:33a, 151b, 209a–b; 3:8a, 298b; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:204–5, n. 91.

The context in Proverbs (30:21–23) reads: *At three things the earth trembles, four it cannot bear: a slave becoming a king, a scoundrel sated with food, a loathsome woman getting married, and a slave-girl supplanting her mistress*. For Rabbi Abba, *a slave* alludes to Egypt, who suddenly gained dominion. See *Zohar* 2:16b–17a (*MhN*).

72. **event is proclaimed…** See BT *Bava Batra* 12b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "Ever since the day that the

Temple was destroyed, prophecy has been taken from the prophets and given to fools and children."

Birds were thought to foretell future events through their chirping and motion in flight. On bird divination, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:2 (citing Ecclesiastes 10:20); *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:3; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 11 (and Buber's note); BT *Gittin* 45a; Rashi on 2 Chronicles 9:4; Radak on 1 Kings 5:10; Naḥmanides on Deuteronomy 18:9; *Zohar* 1:126b–127a, 183b, 194b, 217b; 3:204b.

73. **gateway of the gate...** בבא דתרעא (*Bava de-tar'a*), a redundancy found only in the *Zohar*, perhaps signaling a deep inner meaning about to unfold.

See *Zohar* 1:201b; 2:28a; 3:15a; *ZḤ* 12b (*MhN*); Israel Al-Nakawa, *Menorat ha-Ma'or*, 3:68–69; 4:297–98.

74. **Lofty, lofty ones...** The bird is addressing either Rabbi El'azar and his companions, souls of the righteous, or angels. The "princes" are the heavenly princes of individual nations (above, note 71), three of whom are poised to rule and one of whom is about to be dethroned.

75. **I projected...** רמינא קלא (*Remeina qala*), which can mean either "I shouted"—literally, "I threw קלא (*qala*), a voice"—or "I threw *qala*, a clod of earth."

For the first alternative, see the rabbinic idiom, e.g., in BT *Shabbat* 124b, *Eruvin* 63a, *Mo'ed Qatan* 17a; *Zohar* 3:210b–211a; *ZḤ* 84c (*MhN, Rut*); *DE*. For the second, see *Qohelet Rabbah* on 10:10; BT *Pesaḥim* 62b, *Rosh ha-Shanah* 25a; *OY*; *Sullam*; cf. *Zohar* 1:217a. See *NZ*; *MmD*.

76. **those three fell...** Indicating that the three nations would dominate Egypt.

77. **child passed by, reciting...** In rabbinic literature, children's utterances of biblical verses can constitute a form of divination.

See BT *Ḥagigah* 15a–b; *Gittin* 56a, 68a; *Ḥullin* 95b; *Ester Rabbah* 7:13; *Zohar* 1:238b; above, at note 72; Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, 195–96.

The godlings of Egypt renders אלילי מצרים (*elilei mitsrayim*). The word אליל (*elil*) is often translated "idol"; for its cognates and etymology, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1613. On the second child's exclamation, see Ezekiel 29:9. On the third child's exclamation, see Isaiah 29:14; *Zohar* 1:125a (*MhN*).

78. **the wise are always preferable to prophets…** See BT *Bava Batra* 12a: "Rabbi Avdimi from Haifa said, 'Since the day that the Temple was destroyed, prophecy has been taken from the prophets and given to the wise.'… Amemar said, 'A wise person is preferable to a prophet.'"

See *Zohar* 1:7b, 183b, 194b; 3:35a; Huss, "Ḥakham Adif mi-Navi," 103–39.

79. **spirit of human beings would not differ…** See Ecclesiastes 3:18–21.

80. **first executes judgment upon the prince…** Upon that nation's heavenly prince.

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:14; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:22; *Tanḥuma, Bo* 4, *Beshallaḥ* 13, *Mishpatim* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bo* 6, 19; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:9; 21:5; 23:15; *Zohar* 1:69a, 86a; 2:18a–b (*MhN*), 29a, 46b, 49a, 54b, 175a, 232b; 3:147a; above, note 71. The verse in Isaiah reads: *YHVH will punish the host of the heights….*

81. **passed through that flowing, gushing river of fire…** The image of the river of fire derives from Daniel 7:10: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him, a myriad of myriads attending Him*.

On heavenly beings issuing from this fiery stream, see BT *Ḥagigah* 14a: "Shemu'el said to Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Rav, 'O son of a lion! Come, I will tell you one of those fine words said by your father: Every single day ministering angels are created from a river of fire, chant a song, then cease to be, as is said: *New every morning, immense is Your faithfulness!* (Lamentations 3:23).'"

On the punishment of angels or heavenly princes in the river of fire, see *Ma'yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:60); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margaliot), 530; Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 139; *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*), 69a; 2:19b (*MhN*), 49a, 52b, 239b, 252b (*Heikh*); 3:27a, 30a.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:1; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:8; BT *Ḥagigah* 13b; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:6; *Zohar* 1:17b, 18b–19a; 2:10a, 213b–214a, 247a (*Heikh*); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 507, 510; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 65; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 205; *OY*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:624–25.

82. **birds, children, and those human fools…** See above, note 72.

83. ***A new king*, really…** Rabbi Ḥiyya is playing on—and synthesizing—two conflicting rabbinic interpretations. See BT *Eruvin* 53a: "*A new king arose over Egypt*. Rav and Shemu'el. One said, 'Really *new*.' The other said, 'His decrees were innovated.'"

See BT *Sotah* 11a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:8; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 5; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemot* 7; *Zohar* 2:10a; *OY*; Galante.

84. ***Joseph brought all the silver…*** The full verse reads: *Joseph gathered all the silver to be found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan in return for the provisions they were buying, and Joseph brought the silver to the house of Pharaoh*.

On Joseph's sustaining the Egyptians, see Genesis 41:53–57; 47:13–26. On Pharaoh's "pretending not to know," see Rashi's formulation in his commentary on Exodus 1:8 and the rabbinic sources cited in the preceding note.

85. **arose on his own…like King Ahasuerus…** See BT *Megillah* 11a; *Zohar* 2:16b (*MhN*).

86. **When a king arose above…** Once Egypt's heavenly prince was empowered, a Pharaoh was

empowered on earth. See above, note 71.

87. ***The godlings of Egypt will tremble before Him…*** The verse concludes: *and the heart of Egypt melt within it*. See above at note 77.

88. ***All the inhabitants…*** The full verse reads: *All the inhabitants of earth are considered as nothing. He does as He wishes with the host of heaven and the inhabitants of earth. There is no one who can stay His hand or say to him, "What have You done?"*

89. **Why is it different…** Why, in punishing all other nations, did God simply issue a decree, whereas with Egypt, even after sending numerous plagues He revealed Himself directly and smote all the firstborn?

The full verse in Exodus reads: *I will pass through the land of Egypt on this night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt from human to beast, and upon all the gods of Egypt I will render judgment—I, YHVH*. According to a midrashic reading in the Passover Haggadah, "*I will pass through the land of Egypt*—I and not an angel. *And I will strike down every firstborn*—I and not a seraph. *And upon all the gods of Egypt I will render judgment, I, YHVH*—I am He, and no other."

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 7; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 26:8.

90. **to bring out *Matronita*…** To rescue *Shekhinah* from exile, since She shared in Israel's suffering.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, notes 9, 15. מטרוניתא (*Matronita*) is an aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron, married woman, noble lady," and is often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the divine spouse. Edom symbolizes both Rome and medieval Christianity. On the blessed Holy One personally redeeming *Shekhinah* from the final exile, see *Zohar* 2:239b–240a; 3:6a–b.

91. **in the exile of Babylon…** Why didn't the blessed Holy One come Himself to redeem *Shekhinah*?

On the presence of *Shekhinah* in the Babylonian exile, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1; *Zohar* 1:222b.

92. **Sin was the cause…** By intermarrying in Babylon, they inserted the covenantal sign of circumcision into a foreign domain and suffered the consequences. In Egypt, the Israelites did not intermarry, remaining pure *children of Israel*.

See Ezra 9–10; BT *Berakhot* 4a; Rashi on Leviticus 18:2; above, note 38; *Zohar* 1:260a (*Hash*); 2:239b–240a. On Israel's sexual purity in Egypt, see above, p. 13 and nn. 50, 53. The phrase *tribes of Yah* derives from Psalms 122:4.

93. ***godlings…*** Referring not to earthly idols, but to the heavenly princes of Egypt (and other nations). On this term, see above, note 77.

94. **brings suit…** אתקביל (*Itqevil*), from the root קבל (*qvl*), "to complain, bring charges." For various renderings, see Galante; Soncino; *Sullam*; Edri; *MmD*; Scholem. Cf. below: "The complaint brought by the blessed Holy One…"

95. **finest of the land…*land of Goshen… land of Rameses…*** Where Pharaoh allowed Joseph's father and brother to settle, and where the Israelites remained throughout their slavery, even during the plagues. See Genesis 47:6.

96. ***but of the livestock…*** The verset, describing the fifth plague, reads: *All the livestock of Egypt died, but of the livestock of the Children of Israel not one died*. Here, it is quoted to demonstrate that the Israelites' animals were not confiscated by the Egyptians.

97. **באפס (*be-efes*), *for nothing*… end of the world…** Rabbi Shim'on plays on two meanings of אפס (*efes*): "nothing" and "end (of the earth)."

The majority of the Israelites of the northern kingdom were dispersed throughout the Assyrian empire in 721 B.C.E. See 2 Kings 17:6.

98. **oppress them, kill them, and confiscate…** The present tense highlights Israel's ongoing suffering at the

hands of medieval Christian powers, symbolized by Edom.

The verse in Ezekiel concludes: *And they will know that I am YHVH*.

99. **visit the Doe…** *Shekhinah*, to redeem Her from exile along with Her people.

Shekhinah is identified with the *doe of love* (Proverbs 5:19) and *the doe of dawn* (Psalms 22:1). See *Zohar* 1:4a; 2:10a–b, 46a, 52b, 56b, 119b (*RM*); 3:21b, 25b, 249a–b. Cf. 2:52b, 219b–220a; 3:68a; below, p. 266, n. 236. On *the doe of dawn* and Israel's redemption, see JT *Berakhot* 1:1, 2c; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 6:10; *Midrash Tehillim* 22:13. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, notes 9, 15.

100. **later erasing all memory of the earlier…** For this formulation, see *Tosefta Berakhot* 1:11, *Sotah* 15:7; JT *Berakhot* 1:6, 4a; *Sotah* 9:12, 24b; BT *Berakhot* 13a.

101. **On that day** Apparently, the first of the forty days. See below.

102. **Bird's Nest…** The image derives from Deuteronomy 22:6–7 (quoted and expounded below): *If a bird's nest happens to be before you on the way, in any tree or on the ground—fledglings or eggs—and the mother crouching over the fledglings or over the eggs, do not take the mother together with the children. Surely send off the mother, and the children you may take for yourself, so that it may go well with you and you will prolong your days*.

On the link between this biblical commandment and the Messiah, see *Devarim Rabbah* 6:7: "If you fulfill this *mitsvah*, you hasten the coming of King Messiah." Thus, the Messiah emerges from (fulfilling the *mitsvah* of) the *bird's nest*!

See below at notes 109–44; *Zohar* 3:196b; Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 132–33; Scholem. On the Messiah's appearance in Galilee, see *Leqaḥ Tov*, Numbers 24:17; *Zohar* 1:119a; 2:8b–9a, 220a; below at note 104.

103. ***caves in the rocks and clefts of the rocks…*** The verse reads: *caves in the rocks and hollows in the*

ground. The phrase *and clefts of the rocks* derives from Isaiah 7:19.

104. **Galilee… first place… to be destroyed…** In 733–32 B.C.E., the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser conquered portions of Galilee and exiled thousands of its inhabitants to Assyria. According to one tradition, this marks the beginning of the Diaspora of the ten northern tribes.

See 2 Kings 15:29; above, note 102.

105. **single star will rise…** Symbolizing the Messiah, who will battle all seventy nations, symbolized by the seven other stars.

On the Messianic symbolism of the star, see the interpretation of Numbers 24:17 (*A star marches from Jacob*) in JT *Ta'anit* 4:5, 68d; *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:4; *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 2:2; Naḥmanides on the verse; *Zohar* 1:119a; 2:172b; 3:212b. Cf. *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi* on the verse; Revelation 22:16. On the seventy heavenly princes of the nations, see above, note 71. On the battle of the stars, see *Zohar* 2:203a.

106. **missiles…** טיסין (*Tisin*), apparently from the root טוס (*tus*), "to fly."

See *Zohar* 1:16a, 19b, 108b (*ST*), 218a–b; 2:147b; 3:229b (*RM*). The object of "swallowing them" is apparently the seven surrounding stars; see *Zohar* 2:203a. According to *OY*, it is the flaming missiles.

107. **Messiah will be hidden…** On this theme, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:9; *Rut Rabbah* 5:6.

108. **unbridled Jews will defect…** See *Leqaḥ Tov*, Numbers 24:17; *Aggadat Mashiaḥ*, in *Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:142. Cf. Daniel 11:14.

109. ***If a bird's nest…*** The second verse reads in full: *Surely send off the mother, and the children you may take for yourself, so that it may go well with you and you will prolong your days*.

Below, Rabbi Shim'on interprets these verses messianically, but here he alludes to a different interpretation, according to which the mother bird symbolizes *Binah* (the Divine Mother), who lies beyond comprehension and cannot be grasped. So, *send off the mother*—let Her go, put Her out of your mind, do not even try to capture this subtle dimension of divinity. Rather, focus on *the children*, the lower *sefirot* engendered by *Binah*.

See *Bahir* 74 (104–105); Naḥmanides and Recanati on Deuteronomy 22:6; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod, Berakhot* 33b, *Ḥullin* 142a; *Zohar* 1:158a; 2:93a; 3:254a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 338–39. Cf. *Zohar* 1:219a; 2:85b.

110. **bellies of Torah… thirty-two paths…** "Bellies of Torah" suggests being filled with learning. For the idiom, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 4:13; Solomon ibn Adret, *She'elot u-Tshuvot* 1:414, 416.

According to *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1–2, God created the world by means of "thirty-two wondrous paths of wisdom," namely, the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet and the ten *sefirot*. Here, the thirty-two paths are attributed to Torah, either through an identification of wisdom with Torah or by association with the thirty-two hermeneutical principles outlined in the *Baraita of Thirty-Two Rules*. See below at note 147; *Zohar* 2:91a, 174a, 233a.

111. **Eden** עדן (*Eden*), "delight," at the center of the Garden. See Genesis 2:10; *Zohar* 2:210b.

112. **Bird's Nest…** See above, note 102. On the bird in the Garden, see *ZḤ* 61b (*MhN, ShS*); *Zohar* 1:154b (*ST*).

113. **patriarchs… Rachel, tears on her face…** On the patriarchs' mourning the destruction of the Temple, see *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; 1:20; *Eikhah Zuta* 1:26; BT *Menaḥot* 53b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*, add. 5.

The verse in Jeremiah reads: *A voice is heard on a height—wailing, bitter weeping—Rachel weeping for her*

children, refusing to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.

114. **along with… supernal camps…** Of angels, until the weeping reaches the Throne.

115. **Bird's Nest… summoned** Rabbi Shim'on is playing on the wording *If a bird's nest* יקרא (*yiqqare*) *happens to be* (Deuteronomy 22:6), which can be understood via a homonym as *If a bird's nest yiqqare, is called*.

116. **wicked kingdom…** The Gentile oppressors of Israel.

In rabbinic literature the "wicked kingdom" refers to the Roman empire. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 2:4; BT *Berakhot* 61b; *Zohar* 1:171a; 2:134a–b, 184a, 204b, 240a; Moses de León, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 384.

117. **restore the letters of His name…** The individual letters of the name יהוה (*YHVH*) symbolize all of the *sefirot*. The י (*yod*), being the smallest letter of the alphabet, symbolizes the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, while its upper stroke symbolizes *Keter*. The first ה (*he*), a letter that in Hebrew grammar serves as the typical feminine marker, symbolizes the Divine Mother, *Binah*. The ו (*vav*), whose numerical value is six, symbolizes *Tif'eret* and the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). The second ה (*he*) symbolizes *Shekhinah*. As the Messianic redemption commences, these letters will be perfectly restored, signifying the reunion of the *sefirot*.

On the sefirotic symbolism of the letters of יהוה (*YHVH*), see Asher ben David, *Peirush Shem ha-Meforash*, 112; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 44a–45b.

118. **one star…** Symbolizing the Messiah. See above, note 105.

119. **fire…side of the north…** Both symbolizing *Din* (harsh Judgment), source of demonic powers.

120. **side of the south…** Symbolizing *Ḥesed* (Loving-kindness).

121. **as it darkened…** See *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:10.

122. **against her** Against Rome.

123. **edicts of persecution…** See above at note 100.

On the formulation “Happy is one who chances not to be there, and happy is one who chances to be there!” see above at note 99: “Woe to one who is present at that time, and happy is one who is present at that time!…”

124. **scepter will arise…** See Numbers 24:17: *A star marches from Jacob / שבט* (*shevet*), *a scepter, arises from Israel*. The word *shevet* can mean “scepter, ruler, tribe, meteor.” On the Messianic symbolism of the *star*, see above, note 105.

125. **weapons, engraved with letters…** This image derives from a midrashic tradition about the Israelites at Mount Sinai.

See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shelaḥ Lekha*, add. 1: “Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai said, ‘He [God] adorned them with weapons engraved with the Ineffable Name [*YHVH*], and as long as they possessed these, no evil could touch them, neither the Angel of Death nor anything else. As soon as they sinned [with the Golden Calf], Moses said to them: *Now take off your ornaments, and I will decide what to do to you* (Exodus 33:5). At that moment, *When the people heard this evil word, they mourned* [*and no one put on his ornaments*]. What is written? *The Children of Israel were stripped of their ornaments*… (ibid., 4, 6).’”

See *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 33:4, 6; *Targum Shir ha-Shirim* 2:17; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 47; BT *Shabbat* 88a, *Avodah Zarah* 5a; Naḥmanides on Exodus 33:6; *Zohar* 1:52b, 63b, 126b; Green, *Keter*, 70–71.

126. **for the Doe to unite…** For *Shekhinah* to reunite with *Tif’eret*.

See *Zohar* 2:145b; 3:118a. On *Shekhinah* as Doe, see above, note 99.

127. **Bird’s Nest…** See above, note 102.

128. **ten garments, called ‘garments of zeal’…** On garments of zeal or vengeance, see Isaiah 59:17; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 22:5; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:10; *Pirqei Mashiaḥ*, in *Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:70–71; Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 132.

129. **Bird’s Nest is summoned…** See above, note 115.

130. **390 firmaments…** The number 390 is the *gimatriyya* (numerical value) of שמים (*shamayim*), “heavens.”

See *Derekh Erets Rabbah* 2:31; *Zohar* 1:4a; 2:195b; 3:173a; *ZḤ* 53b; Solomon ibn Adret, *She’elot u-Tshuvot* 1:538.

131. **blessed Holy One was adorned…** See *Zohar* 2:132a. Cf. *Midrash Avkir*, 45 (quoted in *Yalqut Shim’oni*, Exodus 241).

132. **Mourners of Zion…** See *Pesiqta Rabbati* 34 (referring to human mourners); *Zohar* 1:38b (*Heikh*); 2:195b; *ZḤ* 88a (*MhN, Rut*).

133. **purple robe…** On the divine purple robe, see *Midrash Tehillim* 9:13; *Yalqut Shim’oni*, Numbers 247, Psalms 643, 869; *Zohar* 1:39a (*Heikh*), 41a (*Heikh*), 224b. Cf. above, note 128.

134. ***On the way…*** Rabbi Shim’on returns to the verse about the *bird’s nest* (Deuteronomy 22:6): *If a bird’s nest happens to be before you on the way, in any tree or on the ground—fledglings or eggs—and the mother crouching over the fledglings or over the eggs, do not take the mother together with the children*. See above, notes 102, 115.

Now he interprets the phrase *on the way* as alluding to Rachel, who died *on the way* (Genesis 35:19; 48:7) and who, according to tradition, remains there mourning over the exile of Israel. As Messiah approaches, adorned with the bird’s nest, he encounters Rachel *on the way*, and she finally allows herself to be comforted by him. See Jeremiah 31:15, quoted above, note 113.

135. **Jericho, city of trees…** Known as *city of the palm trees* (Deuteronomy 34:3).

136. **הארץ (*ha-arets*), *the land*—Jerusalem** In the verse in Deuteronomy 22 the simple sense of the word is *the ground* (see above, note 134), but here Rabbi Shim'on understands it as *the land*—the Holy Land, specifically the holy city of Jerusalem.

137. **land of Galilee, where Israel's exile began** See above, notes 102, 104.

138. **which will return to its place** Or, "and he [the Messiah] will return to his place."

139. **few in the world** See BT *Sanhedrin* 97a, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "In the generation when the son of David [i.e., the Messiah] arrives, scholars will dwindle."

140. **merit of schoolchildren…** On their merit, see BT *Shabbat* 119b, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah the Prince, "The world endures only for the sake of the breath of schoolchildren."

141. **potent bosom** תוקפא (*Tuqpa*), "power, strength," also "anger." In the *Zohar* this word usually means simply "power," but occasionally it signifies "bosom, breast." This new sense derives from *Targum Onqelos* on Numbers 11:12, which renders the biblical expression שאהו בחיקך (*sa'ehu ve-ḥeiqekha*), *carry it* [the people Israel] *in your bosom*, as סוברהי בתוקפך (*sovarhi ve-tuqpakh*), "carry it in your strength." This Targumic rendering is a paraphrase, unless the translator read or imagined the Hebrew בחזקך (*ve-ḥizqekha*), *in your strength*, instead of בחיקך (*ve-ḥeiqekha*), *in your bosom*—a tiny orthographical difference.

Based on this Targumic usage of *tuqpa*, the *Zohar* sometimes employs the word to signify "bosom." Scholem contends that this is due to a misunderstanding: "The author mistook the Midrashic *interpretation* for a *literal translation!*" However, it seems more likely that the newfangled meaning is due not to ignorance but to linguistic playfulness, so typical of the *Zohar*.

See *Zohar* 2:96a–b, 113a–b; 3:127b (*IR*), 206a, 234a; *ZḤ* 92c–d (*MhN, Eikhah*); Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David* , s.v. *tuqpa*; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 165, 389, n. 48.

142. ***those weaned from milk…*** The full verse reads: *Whom will he teach knowledge? To whom will he explain a message? Those weaned from milk, taken from the breast?*

143. **for their sake *Shekhinah* dwells…** *Shekhinah* (*the mother*) dwells with Israel for the sake of *the fledglings* (schoolchildren) or *the eggs* (infants). In the verse in Deuteronomy the simple sense of על (*al*) is *over* (*the fledglings*…), but Rabbi Shim'on understands it as *for* (*the sake of the fledglings*…).

On *Shekhinah*'s dwelling in exile, see above, notes 9, 15. On the small number of the wise, see above, note 139. On *fledglings* and *eggs*, cf. *Zohar* 3:253b (*RM*); *TZ*, intro, 1b.

144. ***Do not take the mother…*** The Messiah is instructed not to deliver *Shekhinah* (*the mother*) immediately by himself, but rather to wait for the children and infants to empower him, following which *Shekhinah* will arouse the compassion of Her divine spouse, who will redeem Her.

On the verse in Amos, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 16:8; *Zohar* 1:72b; 2:11a, 239b–240a; 3:6b.

145. ***If your banished lie…*** The verse concludes: *and from there He will take you*.

146. ***As in the days of your coming out…*** On the theme of this verse, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 8; *Tanḥuma, Eqev* 7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 17; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:11.

147. **thirty-two paths within the Holy Name** These paths comprise the ten *sefirot* and the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. See above, p. 27 and n. 110. On the relationship between the name *YHVH* and the ten *sefirot*, see above, note 117.

148. **Holy Name is incomplete…** The sefirotic union is not consummated. See above, p. 29 and n. 117.

149. ***I adjure you…*** The full verse reads: *I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by gazelles or by does of the*

field, that you neither awaken nor arouse love until it [or: *she*] *desires*.

Here Rabbi Shim'on associates צבאות (*tseva'ot*), *gazelles*, with the divine King, one of whose names is יהוה צבאות (*YHVH Tseva'ot*), *YHVH* of Hosts. On the Messianic interpretation of this verse, see BT *Ketubbot* 111a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah*, ad loc.; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 12:9–10; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 7–8.

150. **forces and camps below** Angels beneath *Shekhinah*.

151. ***love*—right hand...** *Ḥesed* (Love), the right hand or arm of the sefirotic body, which embraces *Shekhinah*, thereby redeeming Israel. See below at note 174.

152. ***Until she desires...*** Until *Shekhinah*, lying in exile, expresses desire for reunion, and until Her spouse does the same.

153. **Rabbi Shim'on raised his hands...** On this passage and its relationship to the *Idra Rabba*, see Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 7–11.

The Sea of Tiberias is the Sea of Galilee.

154. **remembers His children and sheds two tears...** See BT *Berakhot* 59a: "When the blessed Holy One remembers His children, who are plunged in suffering among the nations of the world, He sheds two tears into the Great Sea, and His voice resounds from one end of the world to the other." Rabbi Shim'on and the Companions share in the divine weeping.

See *Zohar* 1:4b; 2:18a (*MhN*), 19a–b (*MhN*), 195b; 3:172a–b; Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 133.

155. **I have already aroused mysteries...** Showing how the letters of the name יהוה (*YHVH*) allude to the arousal of divine compassion.

See *Zohar* 1:116b–117b, 119a; 2:47b; above, p. 29 and n. 117. Cf. Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 165–66, n. 23.

The word אתערנא (*it'arna*) can be rendered "I have aroused" or "We have aroused." See Kaddari, *Diqduq ha-*

Lashon ha-Aramit shel ha-Zohar, 40–43. The idiomatic sense is “to arouse the meaning, discuss.”

156. **merit of this generation…** Only because of their great merit can Rabbi Shim’on now reveal this mystery.

On the unique status of Rabbi Shim’on’s generation, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 35:2; *Zohar* 1:225a; 2:147a; 3:58a, 79a, 159a, 206a, 236b, 241b, 287a. On Rabbi Shim’on’s power to protect the world until the Messiah arrives, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 35:2; JT *Berakhot* 9:2, 13d; BT *Sukkah* 45b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:15.

157. **exile will persist…** This tone of despair reappears in *Zohar* 1:136a (*MhN*), 219b; 2:188b, 189b; 3:112a.

158. ***O YHVH our God!…*** In its simple sense, the second half of the verse apparently means *but it is only You whose name we mention* [or: *utter, acknowledge, profess*]. The hyperliteral translation above (*but only by You*…) fits the interpretation offered below by Rabbi Shim’on. See *Midrash Tehillim* 28:2.

"Faith" here means the realm of kabbalistic faith, namely, the ten *sefirot*.

159. **beginning of supernal mysteries...** This double divine name signifies *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, source of all the lower *sefirot*, known as "lamps."

160. **another rules over them** Israel in exile is dominated by other earthly nations and by demonic powers.

See *Sifra, Behar* 5:4, 109c: "Every Israelite who dwells in the land of Israel accepts upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, and everyone who leaves the land is like an idol worshiper."

See *Tosefta Avodah Zarah* 4:5; BT *Ketubbot* 110b; *Avodah Zarah* 8a; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 26; *Zohar* 1:95b, 153a, 177a; 2:33a; 3:266b.

161. **Holy Name, totality of twenty-two letters...** The word בך (*bekha*), *by You*, is numerically equivalent to twenty-two and so alludes to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, which express the divine essence. This inclusive name signifies *Tif'eret*, who receives the flow from above and conveys it to *Shekhinah* and Israel below.

The verse from Exodus reads: *Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel Your servants, to whom You swore by Yourself*... The verse in Genesis reads: *He* [Jacob] *blessed them* [Ephraim and Manasseh] *on that day, saying, "By you will Israel bless, saying, 'May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh'"*... For Rabbi Shim'on, the word *Israel* in this verse may refer to *Tif'eret*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel). For another interpretation, see *MM*.

"Assembly of Israel" can refer to the people Israel or to *Shekhinah*. See above, note 18. On *bekha* (or *bakh*), see *Pirqei Mashiaḥ*, in *Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:68; *Zohar* 1:33b; Vol. 1, p. 206, n. 804. On *Tif'eret* including all the letters, see *Zohar* 1:247a–b. For other interpretations of "Holy Name, totality of twenty-two letters," see *OY*; *MmD*. Cf. *Zohar* 3:146b–147a.

162. **When perfection prevails…** Ideally, the divine couple (*Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*) remain united, and *Shekhinah* (known as *Your name*) should never be invoked by Herself and thereby separated from Her Husband. In time of exile, however, due to sin and suffering the union is disrupted: Israel utters *Your name* in separation, splitting Her off from *Tif'eret—levad bekha*, understood now to mean *apart from You*, apart from *Tif'eret*.

163. **First Temple… mystery of the first ה (*he*)…** The First Temple, destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E., symbolizes the Divine Mother, *Binah*. She is also symbolized by the first ה (*he*) in the name יהוה (*YHVH*). (Grammatically, ה [*he*] is the typical feminine marker in Hebrew.) The seventy-year duration of the first exile symbolizes the seven *sefirot* (*Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*), which gestate within and issue from *Binah*. During that exile, *Binah* was estranged from these children, who were thus separated from Her name—indicated by the letter ה (*he*).

164. **י (*yod*)…withdrew…** This tiny first letter of the name יהוה (*YHVH*) symbolizes the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, which waters *Binah*. Although normally united with *Binah*, during the first exile He withdrew above to *Ein Sof*. Consequently, *Binah* (known as First Temple) could no longer convey the stream of emanation to the lower *sefirot*.

Binah is called "seven years" because She includes and generates all seven lower *sefirot* (see the preceding note.) The simple meaning of the verse in Kings, describing Solomon's building of the Temple, is *He built it in seven years*. However, the Hebrew wording does not include the preposition ב (*be*), "in," and Rabbi Shim'on exploits this lack, suggesting that *Binah* was *built* or fashioned to be *seven years*, that is, to include the sefirotic septet. (He is also playing on בינה [*binah*], "understanding," and ויבנהו [*va-yivnehu*], *he built it*.)

On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:147b (*ST*), 247a; 2:31a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 8; idem, *Sefer ha-*

Mishqal, 72.

165. **kingdom of Babylon ruled above…** Dominating not only the people Israel below but *Binah* (or Her *sefirot*) above. This is impossible; rather, the impact of Babylon's dominion was more indirect. Whereas originally Mother *Binah* had illumined and nurtured all those below, as a result of sin and exile Her light was obscured and "holy lower ones" (the lower *sefirot*) lost their radiance. See *OY*.

166. **When the dominion of Babylon…** When the exile came to an end, not all of Israel turned back to God or returned to the Holy Land. Even though the end of Babylonian dominion signified the empowerment of *Shekhinah* —who is symbolized by the final ("lower") ה (*he*) of יהוה (*YHVH*) —Israel's sporadic behavior impeded the emanation from *Ḥokhmah*, symbolized by י (*yod*). Their imperfection strengthened the forces of harsh Judgment on the left, which constricted the flow.

On Israel's failure to return en masse from Babylon, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:8–9. On their sin of intermarriage there, see Ezra 9–10; above, p. 24 and n. 92; *OY*. "In disarray" and "erratically" both render בערבוביא (*be-irbuvya*), "in confusion." See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:2 (where the word means "disarray"); *Zohar* 2:164a and 195a (where it refers to intermingling with non-Israelites); *OY*; Galante; *MmD*. On Israel as God's treasure, see Exodus 19:5. On the inferiority of the Second Temple to the First Temple, see JT *Ta'anit* 2:1, 65a; BT *Yoma* 21b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:8.

167. **wars were declared…** Israel's failures stimulated war and the dimming of *Shekhinah*. The Second Temple (symbolizing Her) was destroyed by Rome (known as Edom), and She went into exile along with Her angels (known as the "twelve tribes") and their camps (lower angels or the tribes of Israel).

On *Shekhinah* and the twelve tribes, see *Zohar* 1:158a, 174a, 225b, 231b, 240b–241a, 246a–b; 2:229b–230a;

3:62a, 118b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 8. The expression “darkness covered the earth” derives from Isaiah 60:2.

168. **supernal flow withdrew…** The flow from the highest *sefirot* withdrew from the “flow above Her”—that is, from *Yesod*, who ideally streams into *Shekhinah*. Consequently, She was deprived of the flow and became separated from Her partner.

The simple meaning of the clause in Isaiah is *The righteous one* אבד (*avad*), *perishes*, but Rabbi Shim’on understands it to mean that *Yesod* (known as Righteous One) *avad, loses*, the flow of emanation from above.

See *Zohar* 1:55b, 182a, 196b; 2:57a–b; 3:16b, 69a, 150b, 266b. *Yesod*’s title, Righteous One, is based on Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-Tsaddiq yesod olam*). The expression in its simple sense means *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, but it is understood as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*.

See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34.

169. **Twelve tribes amount…** The immense number of angels surrounding *Shekhinah* (including their camps) signifies the prolongation of exile.

The second part of the sentence can also be rendered: “and since mystery of (*he*) lies among that whole number, exile is prolonged.”

170. **Mystery of mysteries…** Rabbi Shim’on begins to reveal the secret chronology of Messianic redemption. Each of the twelve tribes represents 100 years. The ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel (exiled by the Assyrians in 721 B.C.E.) symbolize 1,000 years; the two tribes Judah and Benjamin (exiled by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E.) symbolize 200 years.

See above at note 155: “Now, however, I must reveal something that no one else is permitted to reveal.” On the opposition to calculating the time of redemption, see BT

Sanhedrin 97b; *Derekh Erets Rabbah* 11:13; cf. *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 12:29.

171. **Tears began to fall…** Contemplating the prolonged bitterness of exile, Rabbi Shim'on begins to cry, and opens with an appropriate verse.

172. **end of twelve tribes…** The Second Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E. (or according to *Seder Olam Rabbah*, 68 C.E.), initiating a prolonged period of exile. Twelve hundred years later, in the 13th century (around the time of the *Zohar*'s composition), the exile intensifies, until finally redemption begins to dawn 66 years later.

If 1,200 years is meant precisely, the exile would intensify in 1270 (or 1268), and redemption would dawn in 1336 (or 1334). However, 1,200 may be intended as a round number, with the intensification of exile corresponding to the beginning of the sixth millennium in 1240. (According to traditional Jewish chronology, the world was created less than 6,000 years ago, at a date corresponding to 3761 B.C.E. The sixth millennium corresponds to 1240/41 C.E.–2239/40 C.E.) If so, the redemption would dawn 66 years later in 1306, corresponding to the date of the appearance of the Messiah, according to *Zohar* 1:119a. Cf. 1:116b–117a; 3:249a (*RM*). See Silver, *Messianic Speculation*, 91–92; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 8–9.

The number 66 derives from the letter ו (*vav*) in the divine name יהוה (*YHVH*). The numerical value of this letter is 6, corresponding to *Tif'eret* and the five other *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod* associated with Him. *Tif'eret* is also symbolized by Jacob, and remarkably in the verse in Leviticus (and nowhere else in the Torah) Jacob's name is spelled יעקוב (*Ya'aqov*)—with a ו (*vav*). This letter is pronounced (and can be spelled more fully) as וו (*vav*), whose two letters now signify respectively 60 and 6—the first number alluding to *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Jacob), the second to *Tif'eret*'s extension: *Yesod*

(symbolized by Joseph). These two *sefirot* constitute a masculine pair.

Tif'eret is described as "soul of the house of Jacob"—soul, or essence, of *Shekhinah*, who contains (or houses) *Tif'eret*, symbolized by Jacob. *Shekhinah* is symbolized by the בית שני (*bayit sheni*), "Second Temple" (literally, "Second House") and the final ("lower") ה (*he*) of יהוה (*YHVH*).

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *I will remember My covenant with Jacob and also My covenant with Isaac and also My covenant with Abraham I will remember, and the land I will remember*. On the spelling יעקוב (*Ya'aqov*) in this verse, see Rashi, ad loc.; *Zohar* 1:117b, 119a, 168a; 3:66b; *Minḥat Shai*, ad loc. The quotation from Genesis conflates two verses. See *Zohar* 1:119a; 3:252a (*RM*). On the chronology, see *Seder Olam Rabbah* 30; Soncino; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 14:1092; 16:1264–65.

173. **signs and miracles...** Mentioned above at notes 99–152.

Israel's troubles are linked with *Isaac* because he symbolizes *Din*, harsh Judgment. For the full verse, see the last paragraph of the preceding note.

174. **right hand...** *Ḥesed*, by whose power King Messiah will redeem Israel and vanquish their enemies. This *sefirah* is symbolized by Abraham. Through these mighty acts, *Shekhinah* will also be redeemed. She is symbolized by *the land* and the final letter of the name יהוה (*YHVH*).

See above at note 151. The full verse in Exodus reads: *Your right hand, O YHVH, glorious in power. Your right hand, O YHVH, smashes the enemy*. For the verse in Leviticus, see above, end of note 172.

175. ***YHVH will be one and His name One*** *YHVH* alludes to *Tif'eret*, and *His name* to *Shekhinah*. The Messianic redemption signifies their union.

176. **66 more years...** Which, together with the 66 years mentioned previously, constitute 132 years, yielding a date of either 1402, 1400, or 1372 C.E. (On the various

chronologies, see above, note 172). At this time, the letters of the name יהוה (*YHVH*) will appear in full glory. This name includes the letter ה (*he*) twice—the first symbolizing *Binah*; the second, *Shekhinah*. (Rabbi Shim'on may be intending a full spelling of the name of this letter, הה (*heh*), paralleling the full spelling וו (*vav*), above at note 172.) The numerical value of ה (*he*) is 5, which multiplied by 10 (a frequent Zoharic technique) yields 50, which multiplied by 2 (for the two occurrences of this letter in יהוה [*YHVH*]) yields 100. Add to this the 32 paths of wisdom—which issue from *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom), symbolized by the י (*yod*) of יהוה (*YHVH*), and emanate to *Tif'eret*, symbolized by the ו (*vav*) of יהוה (*YHVH*)—and the total comes to 132.

On the 32 paths of wisdom, see above, note 110. On ו (*vav*) as a symbol of *Tif'eret* (and the *sefirot* surrounding Him), see above, note 172. For various interpretations of this numerology, see *DE*; *NO*; *MmD*.

177. **132 more years...** Yielding a date of either 1534, 1532, or 1504. See the preceding note.

The first bodies to be resurrected will be those buried in the Holy Land. See *Midrash Tanna'im*, 58; *Bereshit Rabbah* 74:1; JT *Kil'ayim* 9:4, 32c; BT *Ketubbot* 111a; *Tanḥuma, Vayḥi* 3; *Zohar* 1:113a–b (*MhN*), 131a, 181b; 2:151b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 89–90.

The quotation from Job is from God's speech out of the whirlwind (38:12–13): *Since your days began, have you commanded morning, assigned dawn his place, to grasp the corners of the earth* [or: *land*], *so the wicked will be shaken out of it?* See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34; Zohar 1:181b; 2:17a (*MhN*); 3:72b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 89.

178. **Then... will be roused...** When the First Temple was destroyed, the bubbling flow of *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom)—symbolized by the י (*yod*) of יהוה (*YHVH*)—withdrew, or was obstructed. (See above at notes 164–65.) Now, in the time of redemption, the 32 paths of wisdom will stream down,

uniting all the letters of the divine name and consummating in the final ה (*he*), symbolizing *Shekhinah*.

This will take place after an additional 144 years, yielding a date of either 1678, 1676, or 1648. See above, notes 172, 176–77. The year 1648 is clearly indicated in *Zohar* 1:139b (*MhN*). On the Messianic significance of that year, see Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 88–93; Silver, *Messianic Speculation*, 92, 151–92 passim. *Sullam* suggests that the number 144 represents a combination of 132 plus 12 (for the twelve tribes).

179. **count of 408...** This is the total of the various numbers (66, 66, 132, and 144) added to the 1,200 years following the destruction of the Second Temple. See above at notes 172–78; *Zohar* 1:139b (*MhN*).

The Other Side is the demonic realm. "Turning firm and fragrant" renders יתבסם (*yitbassam*), "be sweetened" or "be firmly established." The root בסם (*bsm*) conveys both senses. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 66:2; *Midrash Shemu'el* 26:4; *Zohar* 1:30b, 31a, 34a, 37a, 56a, 137a; 2:105a, 143a, 168a, 227a; 3:18a; Bronsnick, "Ha-Shoresh 'Bsm'"; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 165, 388, n. 44; idem, *Kabbalah*, 228.

180. **Lower ה (*he*) will be filled...** *Shekhinah*—symbolized by the final letter of יהוה (*YHVH*)—will be filled with the flow from above.

The verse in Isaiah reads: *The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, as the light of the seven days* [of Creation]. See BT *Ḥullin* 60b: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Pazzi pointed out a contradiction. 'It is written: *God made the two great lights* (Genesis 1:16), and it is written [in the same verse]: *the greater light... and the lesser light*. The moon said before the blessed Holy One, "Master of the World! Can two kings possibly wear one crown?" He answered, "Go, diminish yourself!" She said before Him, "Master of the World! Because I have suggested something proper I should make myself smaller?" He replied, "Go and rule by day and

night.” She said, “But what is the value of this? What good is a lamp at noon?”….Seeing that her mind was uneasy [that she could not be consoled], the blessed Holy One said, “Bring an atonement for Me for making the moon smaller.”’ As was said by Rabbi Shim’on son of Lakish: ‘Why is the goat offered on the new moon distinguished by the phrase *to* [or: *for*] *YHVH* (Numbers 28:15)? The blessed Holy One said, “Let this goat be an atonement for My having made the moon smaller.”’”

In the *Zohar* the moon symbolizes *Shekhinah*, while the sun symbolizes *Tif’eret*. When the Messiah appears, God will restore the full light of the moon and the full radiance of *Shekhinah*.

See *Zohar* 1:19b–20a, 181a–b; 2:219b; *ZḤ* 70d–71a (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 189; idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 35b. On the verse in Isaiah, see *Zohar* 1:34a, 70b, 131a, 181b.

181. **Sabbath of *YHVH*…** The seventh millennium, the cosmic Sabbath, beginning in 2240/41 C.E. (On this chronology, see above, note 172.) In M *Tamid* 7:4, the Messianic era is described as “a day that is entirely Sabbath.” See BT *Sanhedrin* 97a, in the name of Rabbi Katina: “The world will exist for six thousand years and for one thousand lie desolate.”

Here Rabbi Shim’on reveals that during the seventh millennium, *Shekhinah*—symbolized by the final ה (*he*) of יהוה (*YHVH*)—will absorb souls from Her joyous union with *Tif’eret*. At the end of this cosmic Sabbath, those souls will be clothed in holy bodies.

See Josephus, *The Jewish War* 3:8:5; *Bahir* 86 (121–22); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 92–95; *OY*; Vital; Scholem, *Das Buch Bahir*, 93. The expression “Sabbath of [or: for, to] *YHVH*” derives from Leviticus 25:2, 4 (describing the Sabbatical year); Exodus 20:10; Deuteronomy 5:14.

182. ***A new king arose*** The full verse reads: *A new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph*.

183. **Every day…** See BT *Ḥagigah* 14a: “Shemu’el said to Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Rav, ‘O son of a lion! Come, I will tell you one of those fine words said by your father: Every single day ministering angels are created from a river of fire, chant a song, then cease to be, as is said: *New every morning, immense is Your faithfulness!* (Lamentations 3:23).’”

See above, note 81. The simple meaning of the verse in Psalms is עושה מלאכיו רוחות (*oseh mal’akhav ruḥot*), *He makes winds His messengers*, but Rabbi Yose rereads the words in their precise order: *He makes His angels spirits*, emphasizing the present tense of the verb. See *Tanḥuma, Ḥayyei Sarah* 3; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:4; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 77; *Zohar* 1:40b (*Heikh*), 81a (*ST*), 101a, 144a; 2:229b; 3:126b, 152a; *ZḤ* 10a (*MhN*); *OY*.

184. **certain prince… really *new*** The expression *new king* alludes to a newly created angel, appointed as the heavenly prince of Egypt. See above, pp. 18–19 and n. 71, p. 22 and nn. 83, 86.

185. ***did not know Joseph…*** This heavenly prince of Egypt issued from beneath the sefirotic realm of union, so he was characterized by separation and *did not know Joseph*—symbolizing *Yesod*, who unifies the divine couple.

The verse in Genesis reads: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*—i.e., the river of emanation waters the garden of *Shekhinah* and from there divides. The following verse names the first stream as Pishon, sometimes identified with the Nile. See Samaritan Targum, *Midrash Aggadah*, Sa’adya Gaon, Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Naḥmanides, ad loc.; *Zohar* 1:81b, 125a–b (*MhN*); cf. 2:34b.

Yesod is known as Righteous, based on Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*). The verse in its simple sense means *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, but it is understood as *The righteous one is the*

foundation of the world. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34.

In rabbinic literature Joseph is granted the title Righteous in recognition of resisting the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife. See Genesis 39; BT *Yoma* 35b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 93:7; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana, nispaḥim*, 460. Cf. *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 5, and *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38, which cite Amos 2:6.

According to the *Zohar*, Joseph's sexual purity enabled him to scale the sefirotic ladder and attain the rung of *Yesod*, the divine phallus and site of the covenant of circumcision.

186. **all praise Him in unison** Both *the morning stars* and the angels, known as *sons of Elohim*.

187. ***The doe of dawn…*** As dawn nears, an angelic being conducts a ray from the south (symbolizing *Ḥesed*), in preparation for the union of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, symbolized respectively by day and night. *Shekhinah* is also *the doe of dawn*, gradually shedding Her darkness and being encompassed by Her partner's radiance.

Rabbi El'azar is playing on שחר (*shaḥar*), *dawn*, and שחור (*shaḥor*), "black." On *Shekhinah* as doe, see above, note 99.

188. ***why have You abandoned me?…*** Following Her union with *Tif'eret, Shekhinah* parts from Him. King David's lament—*My God, my God, why have You abandoned me?*—apparently alludes to a double loss: *Shekhinah*'s lack of full radiance and David's own subsequent lack.

See *Zohar* 3:25a–b; *ZḤ* 6a (*MhN*); *OY*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

189. הבל **(*hevel*), *futility*…** The favorite word of the author of Ecclesiastes, who is traditionally identified as King Solomon. The basic meaning of *hevel* is "breath, vapor," and especially in this biblical book, "futility, vanity, that which is meaningless, empty, and fleeting."

190. **verse has been established…** See BT *Horayot* 10b; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 8:14; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 10; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:11.

191. **seven הבלים (*havalim*), breaths…** These cosmic breaths, animating all of existence, are identified with the seven pillars of the world: the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*, corresponding to the seven heavens.

On the breaths, see *Zohar* 1:146b (*ST*); 2:38b–39a, 59a; 3:47b, 291b (*IZ*). On the seven pillars, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12b. On the seven heavens, see ibid.: "Rabbi Yehudah said, 'There are two רקיעים (*reqi'im*), firmaments [or: heavens]….' Resh Lakish said, 'Seven, namely, וילון (*Vilon*), Curtain; רקיע (*Raqi'a*), Expanse; שחקים (*Sheḥaqim*), Heaven; זבול (*Zevul*), Loft; מעון (*Ma'on*), Dwelling; מכון (*Makhon*), Site [or: Foundation]; ערבות (*Aravot*), Clouds. *Vilon* performs no function at all except entering in the morning and leaving in the evening, and renewing each day the act of creation.'"

The verse from Ecclesiastes alludes to this sefirotic septet because the noun *hevel* appears three times in the singular and twice in the plural (each denoting a minimum of two), totaling seven. The simple sense of the verse is: *Futility of futilities!—said Koheleth—Futility of futilities! All is futile!* Or: *Vanity of vanities!… All is vanity!* See *Qohelet Rabbah* and *Qohelet Zuta*, ad loc. On *hevel* as breath, see above, note 189.

192. **other breaths…** Other powers beneath the sefirotic realm. See *Zohar* 1:146b–147a (*ST*).

193. ***There is a breath…*** The simple sense of the verse —*There is* הבל (*hevel*), *futility, that* נעשה (*na'asah*), *occurs, on earth*—is transformed into: *There is a breath that is actualized on earth*. Rabbi El'azar is alluding to *Shekhinah*, the *breath* that issues from the *sefirot* above Her. She is empowered by human righteous action, ascending from earth.

194. **appointed over earth… plucked…** *Shekhinah* is designated to conduct the world. She is nourished by souls of the righteous who are taken from the world while still untainted by sin.

On the effect of souls of the righteous on *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:60a–b, 235a, 244a–b, 245b. On removing the righteous (or innocent) while they are still pure, see BT *Ḥagigah* 5a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 6:2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:15; *Zohar* 1:56b (quoting Ecclesiastes 8:14); 2:96a–b; *ZḤ* 20a–b (*MhN*), 36b (*ST*). Cf. M *Sanhedrin* 8:5; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 218.

On Enoch, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 25:1: "*Enoch walked with God, and he was no more, for God took him*… Rabbi Aivu said, 'Enoch was a hypocrite, sometimes righteous, sometimes wicked. The blessed Holy One said, "While he is righteous I will remove him."'" See Theodor's note ad loc.; *Wisdom of Solomon* 4:10–11.

195. **seized for their sins** Punished for the sins of the wicked and of the generation.

See BT *Shabbat* 33b (Munich MS): "Rabbi Gorion (according to others, Rabbi Yosef son of Rabbi Shema'yah) said, 'When there are righteous ones in the generation, the righteous are seized for the sin of the generation. When there are no righteous in the generation, schoolchildren are seized for the sin of the generation.'"

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 2:6; *Kallah Rabbati* 6:4; Rashi on BT *Ta'anit* 11a, s.v. *ha-tsaddiq avad*; *Zohar* 1:67b–68a, 180a; 2:38b, 53a, 195a. Cf. *Mekhilta, Nezikin* 18; BT *Shabbat* 55a, *Avodah Zarah* 4a. On the death of the righteous as atonement, see Vol. 1, p. 381, n. 296.

196. **Rabbi Yose son of Ya'akov…** He is mentioned in *ZḤ* 81b (*MhN, Rut*) and apparently in *Zohar* 3:127b, 144a (both *IR*). Kefar Ono is located near Lydda.

197. **Rabbi Akiva and his colleagues…** Who, according to tradition, were tortured to death by the Romans during the reign of the Emperor Hadrian in approximately 135 C.E.

Rabbi Yose demands to know from Rabbi Akiva's pupil, Rabbi Me'ir, if there is any Scriptural explanation for the

suffering and cruel death of the righteous.

198. **Because it is revealed...** These wicked ones are spared punishment if God foresees that they will repent or if they are destined to engender worthy children.

Terah was the father of Abraham. Ahaz (the wicked idolatrous king of Judah) was the father of King Hezekiah, who, according to the Bible, eradicated idolatry, cleansed and sanctified the Temple, and restored the Temple cult. See 2 Kings 18:3–6; 2 Chronicles 29–30.

On reasons for sparing the punishment of the wicked, see BT *Bava Qamma* 38b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:4; *Zohar* 1:56b, 118a (*MhN*), 140a, 227a.

199. **whether on this side or that...** Whether certain of the righteous die (while they are still pure or for the sins of their generation) or certain of the wicked live (because they or their descendants will prove worthy), in either case *Shekhinah* (*breath*) is fulfilled and empowered. See above, p. 45 and nn. 193–95.

200. **actions of the wicked are offered to them...** When the righteous encounter sinful opportunities (*conduct of the wicked*) yet withstand the temptation, *Shekhinah* (*breath*) is glorified and empowered.

The expression “mighty in strength” derives from Psalms 103:20: *Bless YHVH, O His angels, mighty in strength, who fulfill His word, hearkening to the voice of His word*.

201. ***mitsvah*, an act of the righteous, is offered to them...** If a virtuous opportunity (*conduct of the righteous*) presents itself to a wicked person and he takes advantage of it, this too empowers *Shekhinah*.

On the Jewish bandit, see *Zohar* 1:118a (*MhN*).

202. ***Woe to the wicked! Evil!...*** The verse concludes: *For what his hands have perpetrated will be requited to him*.

203. **established by the Companions...** See *Qohelet Rabbah* on this verse.

204. **when the moon reigned** According to the Midrash, just as the moon does not become full until the fifteenth day of its cycle, so it remained incomplete until the glorious reign of Solomon in the fifteenth generation from Abraham. See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:12, and *Shemot Rabbah* 15:26: "When Solomon appeared, the disk of the moon became full."

Here the moon symbolizes *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:73b–74a, 150a, 223a, 225b, 238a, 243a, 249b–250a; 2:28b, 85a; 3:61a, 74b, 181b; *ZḤ* 83b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 342.

Rabbi El'azar understands the verse as *I have seen everything in the days of my hevel, breath*—in the days of *Shekhinah*, who is known as *breath*. See above, note 193.

205. ***righteous one*—Pillar of the World** *Yesod* (Foundation), the cosmic pillar. See above, note 185.

206. **אובד (*oved*), *Perishing… loses…*** The root אבד (*'vd*) can mean both "perish" and "lose"; the prepositional prefix ב (*be*) can mean both "in" and "for, on account of." The simple sense of the verse in Ecclesiastes is *a righteous one* אובד בצדקו (*oved be-tsidqo*), *perishing in his righteousness*; but Rabbi El'azar interprets it as *a righteous one losing on account of his righteousness*—meaning that *Yesod* (known as Righteous) is deprived of His flow of emanation from above because *Shekhinah* (known as *righteousness*) is stranded in exile along with Her people and unable to receive from Him.

A similar interpretation applies to the verse in Isaiah. See above, p. 38 and n. 168. On the verse in Ecclesiastes, see *Zohar* 2:38b–39a; 3:46a, 291b (*IZ*). On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, notes 9, 15.

207. ***wicked one prolonging…*** The word מאריך (*ma'arikh*) means "prolongs" or "prolongs life, lives long"; the prepositional prefix ב (*be*) can mean both "in" and "with." The simple sense of the verse in Ecclesiastes is מאריך ברעתו רשע (*rasha ma'arikh be-ra'ato*), *a wicked one prolonging his life in*

his evil; but Rabbi El'azar interprets it as *a wicked one prolonging with his evil one*—meaning that Samael prolongs peace and tranquility for Edom (symbolizing Rome and medieval Christianity) by uniting with (and through the power of) his demonic spouse, Lilith. (The noun *ra'ato, his evil one*, is grammatically feminine.) Their union is fostered by human wickedness.

The phrase *woman of whoredom* derives from Hosea 1:2. See above, note 66.

208. ***booth of David…*** *Shekhinah*, who will be raised from the dust by Her spouse.

On the verse in Amos, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 16:8; *Zohar* 1:72b; 2:9a, 239b–240a; 3:6b.

209. ***took a daughter of Levi…*** Took her in marriage. The Levite couple are the future parents of Moses.

210. ***My love has gone down…*** The verse concludes: *to graze in the gardens and to gather lilies*.

211. **Assembly of Israel…** *Shekhinah*. Every midnight, the blessed Holy One visits this garden, made fragrant by the souls of the righteous. Souls of those who have already died, along with souls waiting to enter the world, populate the garden.

Rabbi Yitsḥak distinguishes between the garden of *Shekhinah*, and the earthly Garden of Eden, in which souls that have departed the world are arrayed in ethereal bodies resembling the physical bodies they inhabited on earth. (According to other accounts, the soul is clothed in an ethereal body before descending to earth, retains it while in the physical body until shortly before death, and then regains it upon ascending.)

On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 18. On the righteous being crowned in the presence of *Shekhinah*, see BT *Berakhot* 17a: "A pearl in the mouth of Rav: 'In the world that is coming, there is no eating or drinking or procreation or business or jealousy or hatred or

competition; rather, the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads, basking in the radiance of *Shekhinah*.'"

On the preexistence of the soul, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:7; BT *Yevamot* 62a; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 11, *Pequdei* 3, *Nitsavim* 3. On the ethereal body, see *Zohar* 1:7a, 81a (*ST*), 90b–91a, 115b (*MhN*), 131a, 217b, 219a, 220a, 224a–b, 227a–b, 233b; 2:13a–b, 96b, 150a, 161b; 3:13a–b, 43a–b, 61b, 104a–b; *ZḤ* 10b–c (*MhN*), 90b (*MhN, Rut*); Naḥmanides on Genesis 49:33; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 390; idem, *Seder Gan Eden*, 133; *OY*; Scholem, "Levush ha-Neshamot," 293–95; idem, *Kabbalah*, 158–59; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 251–73; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:770–73. Cf. Rashi on BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, s.v. *ve-ruḥot unshamot*.

212. **Spirit descending...** The spirit—רוח (*ruaḥ*)—gestates in and issues from *Shekhinah*, and resembles the implement (or matrix) of a seal. In medieval times the matrix of a seal was engraved, and when this matrix was pressed into a substance like warm wax, it left an inverse, protruding impression. Here, the spirit—characteristically within—functions as the engraved matrix in relation to the body, enabling it to protrude and act in the world. At death, when the spirit is stripped from the body, it moves on to the Garden of Eden, where it assumes an image of the body, based on the engraved matrix. What had been engraved inwardly now manifests outwardly.

On the spirit deriving from *Shekhinah*, see below, note 214. On the idiom of "protruding," see *Zohar* 2:73b–75a.

213. **She says, *Set me as a seal*...** *Shekhinah* seeks to inform all of existence, based on supernal engraving.

The verse reads: *Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm*. For various interpretations, see *OY*; *Sullam*; *MmD*. Cf. *Zohar* 1:244b–245a; 2:114a.

214. **soul—deriving from the Tree of Life...** Whereas the spirit—רוח (*ruaḥ*)—derives from *Shekhinah*, the soul—נשמה (*neshamah*)—derives from *Tif'eret*, known as Tree of

Life. At death, the soul enters the higher garden, *Shekhinah*, known as “bundle of life” and *temple*, from where it gazes upon an even higher realm: *Binah*, known as *beauty of YHVH*.

On these origins of *ruaḥ* and *neshamah*, see *Zohar* 1:81a–b (*ST*); 2:99b; 3:170a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:696. On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 1:218a.

The phrase “bundle of life” derives from 1 Samuel 25:29: *The soul of my lord will be bound in the bundle of life*. In the *Zohar*, this *bundle* can refer to the celestial Garden of Eden or to *Shekhinah*, source and destination of all souls.

See *Zohar* 1:65b, 224b; 2:36b, 54a, 59a; 3:24b–25a, 70b, 71b, 92a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 123; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 61 (75–76).

215. ***A man went…*** The full verse reads: *A man went from the house of Levi and took a daughter of Levi*. See above, note 209.

216. **Gabriel, as is said: *The man…*** Based simply on verbal analogy, the anonymous *man* in the verse in Exodus is identified with *the man Gabriel* in Daniel (mentioned earlier in Daniel 8:16).

See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 37:15; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 2; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 38; Rashi on Genesis 37:15; *Zohar* 1:184a; 2:19a (*MhN*).

217. **Assembly of Israel…** *Shekhinah*, who derives from *Gevurah*, or *Din*, associated with Levi and situated on the left side of the sefirotic tree. Since She receives and contains emanation from *Gevurah*, She is described as *house of Levi*.

The angel *Gavriel* (Gabriel) is obviously linked with *Gevurah*. On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 18.

218. ***daughter of Levi*—the soul** The soul is the fruit of the union of *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*, the divine couple. *Shekhinah* is linked with Levi (see the preceding note), so the soul is described as *daughter of Levi*.

Cf. *Zohar* 1:19a (*MhN*), where *Shekhinah* Herself is called *daughter of Levi*.

219. **in the Garden…** In *Shekhinah*, the divine garden. See above, pp. 48–49 and n. 211.

220. **angel…is named *Lailah*, Night…** Rabbi Yose agrees that the angel's name is *Lailah*, but he indicates that this name derives from the angel's origin on the side of the left—the side of *Din*, or *Gevurah*, characterized by limitation and darkness. The sefirotic name *Gevurah* naturally implies the more common name of this angel: *Gavriel* (Gabriel).

On the angel Night, see BT *Niddah* 16b and *Sanhedrin* 96a, both quoting Job 3:3: *The night* [*that*] *said, "A male is conceived."*

221. **Amram… Jochebed…** Now Rabbi Yose interprets the verse according to its simple sense and supplies the names of Moses' parents, both from the tribe of Levi. See Exodus 6:20; Numbers 26:59.

222. **divine echo descended…** A heavenly voice instructed Amram to engender a child with his wife, Jochebed.

"A divine echo" renders בת קול (*bat qol*), literally "daughter of a voice," meaning a reverberating sound or echo, a heavenly voice. According to rabbinic sources, Amram's own daughter, Miriam, urged him to have another child with his wife, and Jochebed herself is referred to as בת ק״ל (*bat q"l*), "daughter of 130," i.e., 130 years old.

See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 2:1; BT *Sotah* 12a, *Bava Batra* 119b–120a; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 43; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:19.

223. ***Shekhinah* was poised…** The sexual union of Amram and Jochebed was holy: their intention focused on the unification of the divine couple, *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret*. Consequently, *Shekhinah* joined them and accompanied the fruit of their union, Moses, throughout his life.

See BT *Sotah* 17a, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "Man and woman: if they are worthy, *Shekhinah* abides between

them; if not, fire consumes them."

The verse in Leviticus reads: *For I am YHVH your God: sanctify yourselves and be holy, for I am holy. Do not defile yourselves…* In rabbinic literature this verse is applied to sanctifying sexual relations. See BT *Shevu'ot* 18b; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:7; *Zohar* 1:54a, 112a (*MhN*), 204a. On sexual holiness, see *Zohar* 1:49b–50a; 2:89a–b; 3:81a–b, 168a; *Iggeret ha-Qodesh*, in *Kitvei Ramban*, 2:333.

See Cordovero's comment (*OY*): "Their desire, both his and hers, was to unite *Shekhinah*. He intended that he was in *Tif'eret* and his wife in *Malkhut* [*Shekhinah*], and his union was for the coupling of *Shekhinah*. She intended, corresponding perfectly, that she was *Shekhinah*, uniting with Her Husband, *Tif'eret*." This matches the Tantric ritual of *maithuna*, in which the human couple focuses on identification with their divine models. See Eliade, *Yoga*, 200–273; idem, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 13:185–86.

On sanctification below and above, see BT *Yoma* 39a: "*Sanctify yourselves and be holy*. If one sanctifies himself slightly, he is sanctified greatly; below, he is sanctified from above; in this world, he is sanctified in the world that is coming." On Amram and *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 2:19a (*MhN*).

224. **Other Side** The demonic realm.

225. **to whom *Shekhinah* clung constantly…** The *Zohar* emphasizes Moses' intimacy with *Shekhinah*, based on the rabbinic tradition that after encountering God on Mount Sinai, Moses abstained from sexual relations with his wife and maintained constant contact with *Shekhinah*. Moses' title איש האלהים (*ish ha-Elohim*), *man of God* (Deuteronomy 33:1), is interpreted to mean "husband of *Shekhinah*."

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 99; BT *Shabbat* 87a; *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10; *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 13; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 7:6; *Zohar* 1:21b–22a, 152b, 234b, 236b; 2:222a; 3:148a, 180a, 261b; *ZḤ* 59b, 72d (*ShS*). On Moses as *ish ha-Elohim*, see below, p. 74 and n. 17.

226. ***The woman conceived…*** The verse concludes: *and she hid him three months*.

227. **born circumcised…** Without a foreskin. On this tradition, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:1; BT *Sotah* 12a; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 2; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:20.

Here (based on the verse in Isaiah), *good* is linked with *righteous one*, who symbolizes *Yesod*, the divine phallus and site of the covenant of circumcision.

See BT *Yoma* 38b, *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Zohar* 1:30b, 33a, 60a, 82b; 2:128b, 176b (*SdTs*); 3:16a, 110b. On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, note 168.

228. **radiance of *Shekhinah*…** Rabbi Yose relates the clause *she saw that he was good* to the similar clause in Genesis concerning the primordial light, and he concludes that Jochebed saw divine radiance filling the house. See BT *Sotah* 12a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:20.

The closing words—"he was everything"—may imply that Moses had regained cosmic consciousness, seeing and extending "from one end of the universe to the other." This awareness, identified with the primordial light of Creation, had been hidden away ever since the time of Adam and Eve.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:6; 41:3; BT *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Zohar* 1:31b; 3:117a; Vol. 1, p. 192, n. 689; Matt, *Zohar*: *The Book of Enlightenment*, 210–11, 237. According to Galante and *Sullam*, "he was everything" implies that Moses was born circumcised and also illumined by the radiance of *Shekhinah*. For other interpretations, see *OY*; *MM*.

229. **Moses was not recognized…** His radiance remained concealed until the revelation at Mount Sinai, three months after the Exodus from Egypt.

Exodus 19:1 reads in full: *On the third new moon after the Children of Israel's going out from the land of Egypt, on this day they came to the Wilderness of Sinai*. According to Kabbalah, the name *Elohim* can designate *Shekhinah*; and *YHVH*, *Tif'eret*.

230. ***When she could no longer hide him…*** The full verse reads: *When she could no longer hide him, she took a papyrus basket for him and smeared it with bitumen and pitch, and she placed the child in it and placed it in the reeds by the bank of the Nile*.

231. **ark… tablets of the covenant…** See Exodus 25:16; Deuteronomy 10:1–5; *ZḤ* 35a.

232. **overlaid inside and out** According to Exodus 25:11, the ark was to be overlaid inside and out with pure gold.

233. **החמירה (*heḥmirah*), made stringent…** Rabbi Yehudah interprets the verb תחמרה (*taḥmerah*), *smeared it*, as an allusion to the stringent *mitsvot* of the Torah. See *ZḤ* 35a.

234. ***the child*… Israel…** The infant Moses represents here the entire people, whom Hosea refers to as *a youth*.

235. **not stringently observed until…** Many of the *mitsvot* apply only in the land of Israel.

See Naḥmanides on Leviticus 18:25, Deuteronomy 4:5; *ZḤ* 35a; *Zohar* 3:286a. Cf. BT *Sanhedrin* 43b.

236. **שפת היאור (*sefat ha-ye'or*)…** Rabbi Yehudah is playing on two meanings of שפה (*safah*), "lip" and "bank," as well as on the alliteration of יאור (*ye'or*), "Nile," and אורייתא (*oraita*), "Torah." See *ZḤ* 35a.

237. ***A man went…*** By verbal analogy, the anonymous *man* in Exodus 2:1 is identified as the blessed Holy One (*Tif'eret*), who is described later in Exodus as *a man of war*.

This passage (until below at note 254) appears in *Zohar* 3:174a–b, where the speaker is Rabbi Ḥizkiyah.

238. ***house of Levi*—blessed Holy One…** The name לוי (*Levi*) is interpreted according to the root לוה (*lvh*), "to accompany, join," as in Genesis 29:34. Here, "blessed Holy One" alludes to *Binah*, or to the site of union between *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom) and *Binah*, the river of emanation.

Levi also suggests Leviathan, who represents the joy of union, based again on the root *lvh*. Leviathan symbolizes

Yesod (the *sefirah* of sexual union and pleasure), described as a river issuing from *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*.

On *Yesod* as Leviathan, see *Zohar* 2:48b, 50b; 3:58a, 60a, all of which quote Psalms 104:26. Cf. 1:247a. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

On the perpetual union of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, see *Zohar* 2:50b, 55a, 56a; 3:4a, 11a, 61b, 77b, 102a, 120a. On the formula "*X*—blessed Holy One; *Y*—blessed Holy One," see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 27:9. On multiple senses of "blessed Holy One," see *Zohar* 1:232b; Galante.

239. ***daughter of Levi*—blessed Holy One...** *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the moon and here designated as blessed Holy One. She is "taken" (in marriage) by *Tif'eret*.

See the end of the preceding note. For another interpretation, see *MM*; *MmD*.

240. ***the woman*, surely!...** *Shekhinah*, the divine female, who gives birth to the soul of Moses. One of Her many names is זאת (*zot*), "this," perhaps because She is the Divine Presence, constantly right here.

Just as a human female matures from *daughter* to *woman*, so *Shekhinah* is first described as *daughter* of the higher divine couple (*Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*), and later when She is married to *Tif'eret*, She is called *woman*.

The quotation from Genesis is part of Adam's exclamation upon the creation of Eve: *This one at last, bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh! This shall be called Woman, for from man was this taken*. On *Shekhinah* as *zot*, see *Zohar* 1:49b, 72a, 93b, 176b, 200b, 228a; 2:37a–b, 39b, 50b–51a, 54b, 57a, 126b; 3:31a, 41a, 179b.

241. ***three months...*** The months of Tammuz, Av, and Tevet are all characterized by harsh Judgment. Traditionally, on the seventeenth of Tammuz, the walls of Jerusalem were breached; on the ninth of Av, the First and Second Temples were destroyed; on the tenth of Tevet, the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem began.

See 2 Kings 25:2; *Zohar* 2:78b; 3:259a.

242. **before Moses descended…** *Shekhinah hid him three months*, that is, She made sure that Moses would not be born during any of these inauspicious months; if he had been, he would have been plagued by suffering.

On the preexistence of the souls of the righteous, see above, p. 49 and n. 211. On the preexistence of Moses' soul, see *Zohar* 2:53b. On his intimate relationship with *Shekhinah*, see above, note 225. Cf. *Zohar* 2:21a (*MhN*).

243. ***papyrus basket*… with Her signs…** The word תיבה (*teivah*), meaning "basket" and "ark," symbolizes *Shekhinah*. By placing Moses within Her *teivah, Shekhinah* protected him from the countless angels who swim within Her sea—angels who would later become jealous of Moses and challenge his receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai.

According to the Bible, every seventh year is a Sabbatical, during which the land must lie fallow and at the end of which all debts are remitted (Leviticus 25:1–24; Deuteronomy 15:1–3). In Kabbalah the Sabbatical symbolizes *Shekhinah*, seventh of the lower *sefirot*. According to the biblical cycle, after seven Sabbaticals comes the Jubilee, proclaimed every fifty years, when slaves are released and land reverts to its original owner (Leviticus 25:8–55). In Kabbalah the Jubilee symbolizes *Binah* (mother of *Shekhinah*), who in general is characterized by the number fifty, based on BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, where Rav and Shemu'el teach: "Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)." In the verse being discussed here, the word גומא (*gome*), *papyrus*, is numerically equivalent to fifty.

The colors white and black may symbolize *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, both of which issue from *Binah* and flank Moses' *sefirah, Tif'eret*. See *ZḤ* 35a, where חמר (*ḥeimar*), *pitch, and bitumen* (Exodus 2:3) are associated respectively with white and black. The association of white with חמר (*ḥeimar*) is

probably due to a midrashic interpretation or reading: חמר (*ḥomer*), "clay." See BT *Sotah* 12a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:21; Rashi on Exodus 2:3. According to a rabbinic image, the Torah was inscribed by God in black fire upon white fire. See JT *Sheqalim* 6:2, 49d; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11.

On *teivah* as a symbol of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:67a. On the angels' opposition to Moses' receiving the Torah, see BT *Shabbat* 88b. The full verse in Psalms reads: *This sea, vast and broad of reach, gliding creatures there innumerable, living beings small and great*. See *Zohar* 1:236a, 247a–b; 2:30b, 48b–49a, 56b.

244. ***Pharaoh's daughter came down…*** A demonic force issuing from *Din*, harsh Judgment, which is located on the left side. Whereas *sea* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, *Nile* represents impurity. See Galante.

The verse reads: *Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe at the Nile, her maidens walking along the Nile*.

245. ***your staff with which you struck the Nile…*** The verse records God's directive to Moses, preparing him to strike the rock at Horeb to bring forth water: *Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel, and your staff with which you struck the Nile take in your hand, and go*. The point here is that Aaron, not Moses, struck the Nile (Exodus 7:19–20); Moses struck (or stretched his staff over and split) only the Red Sea (Exodus 14:16, 21). It would seem, then, that when Scripture states that Moses *struck the Nile*, it really means that he *struck the sea*; thus there is no real distinction between *Nile* and *sea*!

The explanation, however, is that since Moses helped Aaron strike the Nile, it is as though Moses did it himself. Similarly, Scripture states that God *struck the Nile*, since Aaron's action derived from divine command and power. The conclusion is that *Nile* and *sea* are indeed distinct and opposed to one another. See BT *Sanhedrin* 99b.

246. ***Her maidens…*** Other demonic powers deriving from the left side. See above, note 244.

247. ***She opened it…*** The full verse reads: *She opened it and saw him, the child, and look, a boy crying! She had compassion on him and said, "This is one of the children of the Hebrews."* The wording *she saw him, the child* sounds redundant.

248. **You cannot find a word…** A frequent theme in the *Zohar*. See 1:54a, 135a, 145b, 163a, 187a, 201a; 2:55b–56a, 59b, 65b, 98b–99b; 3:79b, 149a, 152a, 174b, 202a, 265a; *ZḤ* 6d (*MhN*). Cf. *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 336; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:47; BT *Menaḥot* 29b; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:50.

249. **insignia of the King and *Matronita*…** The word should not be read ותראהו (*va-tir'ehu*), *and she saw him*, but rather ותרא ה ו (*va-tere he vav*), *she saw* [the letters] *he, vav*, which symbolize respectively *Shekhinah* (known as *Matronita*) and Her spouse, King *Tif'eret*. When Pharaoh's daughter perceived these symbolic letters on the infant Moses, she felt compassion for him.

See BT *Sotah* 12b (and Maharsha, ad loc.); *Shemot Rabbah* 1:24 (and Maharzu and Shinan, ad loc.); Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 2:2; *Da'at Zeqenim* on Rashi on Exodus 2:6.

On *Shekhinah*'s title *Matronita*, see above, note 90. On the letters ה (*he*) and ו (*vav*) as symbols of *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret*, see above, note 117.

250. **Until here…** The verses from this chapter discussed so far allude to the upper world. The following verses can be read simply according to their plain meaning.

The "exceptional" verse (2:4) actually appears earlier than the verse just discussed (2:6). On the spiritual meaning of Exodus 2:4, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 10; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:20; JT *Sotah* 1:9, 17b; BT *Sotah* 11a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:22.

251. ***His sister stationed herself…*** The simple meaning of *his sister* is Miriam, but the phrase alludes to the divine *sister, Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel). According to the kabbalistic reading of Song of Songs, She is addressed by Her lover, *Tif'eret*. Here, She *stationed herself* to watch over Moses.

On the verse in Song of Songs, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; *Zohar* 1:112a, 140b; 2:46a; 3:95a, 233a. The full verse in Exodus reads: *His sister stationed herself afar, to know what would be done to him*. See the last three sources cited at the end of the previous note. On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 18.

252. ***Afar…*** *Shekhinah* watched over Moses from a distance. The word *afar* alludes to the Holy Spirit (sometimes identified with *Shekhinah*), based on the verse in Jeremiah. See the sources cited above at the end of note 250.

In the *Zohar, afar* can allude to *Ḥokhmah*, near the distant top of the sefirotic ladder. See *Zohar* 1:6a; 3:20b, 35b. Cf. 2:125b.

253. **What is implied?…** By the entire preceding discussion.

Souls are engendered by the union of the divine couple, *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret. Shekhinah* (Assembly of Israel) is symbolized by *the earth*, and the verse in Genesis indicates that She gave birth to the soul of Adam.

On the preexistence of the souls of the righteous and of Moses' soul, see above, p. 49 and n. 211; p. 55 and n. 242. On the divine couple as parents of the soul, see *Zohar* 1:245b; 2:94b; 3:7a. On *a living soul* as the soul of Adam, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 7:5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1; *Zohar* 1:34a; 2:55a; 3:39b, 43b, 70b.

254. **kissed him** From the context here, "him" refers to Rabbi Yehudah. In *Zohar* 3:174b, it refers to Rabbi Ḥizkiyah. See above, note 237, and at notes 229, 233.

255. ***His sister…*** **Wisdom…** Alluding to *Shekhinah*, who emanates from *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom) and is known as Lower Wisdom. The verse in Proverbs is applied to Her.

See JT *Sotah* 1:9, 17b; BT *Sotah* 11a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:22; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 20; *ZḤ* 35a; *Zohar* 1:81b, 111b–112a, 140b; 3:296a (*IZ*); above, note 251.

256. **then *his sister stationed herself…*** Then *Shekhinah* watched over Israel from *afar*. See above, note 252.

257. ***Pharaoh's daughter came down…*** The neglect of Torah leads to harsh punishment by the attribute of Judgment, identified here with Pharaoh's daughter. She comes down to attack those among Israel who have humiliated Torah through neglect, bathing in their blood על היאור (*al ha-ye'or*)—understood here to mean not *at the Nile*, but "over *oraita*," because of the humiliation of Torah.

See *Avot* 6:2, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi: "Every single day an echo resounds from Mount Horeb [Sinai], proclaiming: 'Woe to creatures for the humiliation of Torah!'"

See *Zohar* 1:163a; *ZḤ* 35a–b; above, note 236. The verse reads: *Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe at the Nile, her maidens walking along the Nile*.

258. ***Her maidens…*** **nations…** Who chastise Israel as agents of the attribute of Judgment.

259. ***Along ha-ye'or, the Nile…*** The phrase על יד היאור (*al yad ha-ye'or*), *along* [literally, "at the hand of"] *the Nile*, now yields a new meaning: "for they let *oraita*, Torah, slip out of their hands."

See above, note 257. The clause "they let it slip out of their hands" reads literally "they slackened their hands from it." See *Mekhilta, Amaleq (Beshallaḥ)* 1; below, p. 357, n. 556. The conclusion of the last sentence in the text can also be rendered: "and because of its teachers, who let it slip out of their hands."

260. **no gate that those tears cannot enter** See BT *Berakhot* 32b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Since the day the Temple was destroyed, the gates of prayer have been locked.... Yet even though the gates of prayer have been locked, the gates of tears have not."

See *Zohar* 1:132b; 2:12b, 165a, 245b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 80a (*MhN, Rut*).

261. ***she saw the child...*** The full verse reads literally: *She opened it and saw him, the child, and look, a boy crying! She had compassion on him and said, "This is one of the children of the Hebrews."*

"Who sin before" renders דמתחטאין קמי (*de-mitḥatte'in qammei*), an idiomatic expression that normally means "who importune, ingratiate themselves"—based on the root חטא (*ḥt'*), "to find favor, endear oneself." Here, however, Rabbi Yehudah employs it in the sense of "who sin," based on the homonymous but distinct root חטא (*ḥt'*), "to sin." See Rashi on BT *Berakhot* 19a, *Ta'anit* 19a, 23a, s.v. *mitḥatte*.

262. ***children of the Hebrews*—tender-hearted...** Easily regretting their misdeeds and turning back to God.

See BT *Beitsah* 32b, *Yevamot* 79a.

263. ***child's mother...*** *Shekhinah*, mother of Israel, identified here with Rachel weeping for her children.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 82:10; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; *Zohar* 1:134a, 175a–b, 203a, 209b–210a; 2:29b; 3:20b, 187a; *ZḤ* 92a–b (*MhN, Eikhah*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 66 (83).

The context in Exodus (2:7–8) reads: *His sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nursing woman from the Hebrews for you, that she may nurse the child for you?" Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." And the girl went and called the child's mother.* The verse in Jeremiah reads: *A voice is heard on a height—wailing, bitter weeping —Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children, because they are no more*.

264. **tears of weeping shed by Esau…** After Jacob tricked his father, Isaac, into giving him the blessing of the firstborn, Esau wept bitterly. Those tears moved God to reward Esau and his descendants with worldly blessing and dominion, including dominion over Israel. Esau symbolizes both the Roman Empire and medieval Christianity, both of which subjugated the Jewish people.

See Genesis 27:34, 38; *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 15; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 24; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 47; *Midrash Tehillim* 80:4; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 14, 22, 28; Rashi on Psalms 80:6; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Genesis 61; *Zohar* 1:145a, 146b. Cf. 3:258b.

265. ***He turned this way…*** The context (Exodus 2:11–12) reads: *It happened in those days that Moses grew up and went out to his brothers and saw their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man, one of his brothers. He turned this way and that way and saw that there was no man, and he struck the Egyptian and buried him in the sand*.

266. ***This way*—whether he possessed…** Once Moses foresaw that the Egyptian was unworthy and not destined to engender worthy descendants, he killed him.

See *Targum Yerushalmi* and *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Exodus 2:12; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:4; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 59; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:29; *Midrash Tehillim* 24:7; above, p. 46 and n. 198.

267. ***He saw, he saw…*** The repetition of this expression (*he saw an Egyptian man …he saw that there was no man*) alludes to a double supernatural vision: Moses saw by the Holy Spirit that the Egyptian would not engender anyone worthy, and consequently he killed him by his gaze.

The speaker of this paragraph is apparently Rabbi Abba.

268. **brought all this about…** God arranged for this act, which prompted Pharaoh to seek Moses' death, forcing

Moses to flee to Midian. There he found a well—the same well, as it were, that Jacob had come upon several generations earlier. This well symbolizes *Shekhinah*, with whom Jacob and Moses united—both of them attaining the rung of *Tif'eret*. Yet Moses attained greater intimacy with *Shekhinah* than did Jacob: *he sat upon the well*.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Pharaoh heard of this thing and he sought to kill Moses, and Moses fled from Pharaoh's presence and dwelled in the land of Midian, and he sat by* [or: *upon*] *the well*. The full verse in Genesis, describing Jacob's arrival in Haran, reads: *He looked, and here: a well in the field, and there were three flocks of sheep lying beside it, for from that well the flocks were watered. The stone on the mouth of the well was large*.

On Jacob and Moses, see *Zohar* 1:21b–22a, 152b, 236a–b; 3:187b; Liebes, "Myth vs. Symbol," 213–19. Cf. above, note 225. On the relationship or identity between the well of Jacob and the well of Moses, see *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 11; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 35 (and Luria's n. 75); *Shemot Rabbah* 1:32 (1, 11); *Midrash Tehillim* 91:7. See below at notes 280–81, 298.

269. **That well…** See the preceding note. On the well(s) dug by Abraham and Isaac, see Genesis 21:22–34; 26:17–33, and esp. 26:18. Cordovero (*OY*) distinguishes between the various locations of the wells and their shared symbolism.

270. **At the time…** See the list of supernatural phenomena in M *Avot* 5:6: "Ten things were created on Sabbath eve at twilight:… the mouth of the well…." There the reference is to the well that miraculously accompanied the Israelites in the wilderness; here it also alludes to *Shekhinah*. Abraham and Isaac conveyed Her waters to the world; Jacob and Moses united with Her.

271. **Matnitin…** "Our Mishnah." The *Matnitin* and *Tosefta* of the *Zohar* consist mostly of anonymous enigmatic revelations often addressed to the Companions. The

terseness of these passages recalls the style of the Mishnah, and they appear distinct from the *Zohar*'s running commentary on the Torah. I have included this passage of *Matnitin* here because it appears here in numerous manuscripts (Ct1, Ct2, Ly3, M5, M8, Ms5, N6, N41, N47, 017, V16, Z2.)

This passage concludes below at note 278. It appears with some variation in *Zohar* 1:151b–152a as *Tosefta*. See Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 216; Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 163–214.

272. **mystery of faith...** The mystery of the *sefirot*, focus of kabbalistic faith, which consummates in *Shekhinah*. "Faithful cluster" refers to their unification.

273. **When two ascend...** A veiled description of the sefirotic process. One interpretation would be: when *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* ascend toward their unified source in the highest *sefirot*, they receive its emanation between their two arms. Then, this sefirotic pair flows down, generating the lower triad of *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*. *Yesod* mediates "between them"—between *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, who are the source of prophecy. He absorbs the entire flow of emanation, and conveys it to *Shekhinah*.

For various interpretations, see *OY*; *Sullam*; *MM*; *MmD*.

274. **holy well...Field of Holy Apples** *Shekhinah*, situated beneath *Yesod* and receiving the divine flow.

Her name Field of Holy Apples derives from BT *Ta'anit* 29b, in the name of Rav: "*He* [Isaac] *said, 'See, the fragrance of my son* [Jacob] *is like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH*' (Genesis 27:27)... like the fragrance of a field of apple trees."

In Kabbalah the apple orchard symbolizes *Shekhinah*. She is filled with apple trees, namely, the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who are symbolized by the three patriarchs and whose respective colors all appear in the apple: the white pulp, the red skin, and the green stem.

See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 35–37; *Zohar* 1:36a, 85a–b, 122a, 128b, 139a, 142b, 143b, 224b, 249b;

2:60b, 61b; 3:74a, 84a, 133b (*IR*), 135b (*IR*), 286b–287a, 288a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 365.

275. **flocks…** Moses tended the flock of Jethro (Exodus 3:1) and shepherded the Israelites in the wilderness, where they were nourished by *Shekhinah*. Jacob selected animals from Laban's flocks, and they multiplied (Genesis 30:25–43). Here, Jacob's flocks symbolize angels riding in chariots, nourished by *Shekhinah*.

276. **Three pillars…** *Netsaḥ*, *Hod*, and *Yesod*, which channel the flow of blessing to the well of *Shekhinah*.

277. **אדני (*Adonai*), My Lord…** One of the names of *Shekhinah*, who, as the last *sefirah*, rules over *all the earth*. She is also pictured as the *ark* housing *Yesod*, who is symbolized by *the covenant*.

The verse in Deuteronomy reads: *My Lord YHVH, You Yourself have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand*. The verse's opening phrase is customarily vocalized as *Adonai Elohim*, *My Lord God*, in order to avoid the confusing duplication *Adonai Adonai*. On the verse in Daniel, see *Zohar* 3:21b. On *Shekhinah* as ark, see *Zohar* 1:2a, 33b, 50b, 59b, 228b, 251a; 2:13a, 235b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 75 (95).

278. **one holy spring…** *Yesod*, who is known by the name יהוה צבאות (*YHVH Tseva'ot*), Lord of Hosts.

279. ***The priest of Midian…*** The verse concludes: *and filled the troughs to water their father's flock*.

280. **this well is the well of Jacob…** Previously, several of the Companions had indicated that Moses' well and Jacob's well were effectively the same, both symbolizing *Shekhinah*. (See above, pp. 60–61 and nn. 268–70.) Rabbi Yehudah wonders how this could be, given that in Jacob's case a stone had to be laboriously rolled off the mouth of the well, whereas in Moses' case water was drawn effortlessly.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *When all the flocks were gathered there, they would roll the stone off the*

mouth of the well and water the sheep, and they would put the stone back in its place on the mouth of the well.

281. **Jacob removed it…** See Genesis 29:10: *When Jacob saw Rachel, daughter of his uncle Laban, and the sheep of his uncle Laban, he approached and rolled the stone off the mouth of the well and watered the sheep of his uncle Laban*. By removing the stone from the well, Jacob eliminated the harsh aspect of Judgment from *Shekhinah*; from then on, the stone was unnecessary and the waters of *Shekhinah* flowed freely.

The rising water symbolizes the flow of blessing from the well of *Shekhinah*, with whom both Jacob and Moses joined. See *Zohar* 1:151b–153a; below at note 298. On the well's water rising toward Moses, see *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 20.

282. **Let each one say a word of Torah…** On the importance of engaging in Torah while on a journey, see Deuteronomy 6:7; BT *Eruvin* 54a, *Ta'anit* 10b; *Zohar* 1:7a, 58b, 69b–70a, 76a, 87a, 115b, 157a.

283. רוח **(*ruaḥ*)…** The word means "breath, wind, spirit." The context is Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones. The verse concludes: *and breathe into these slain, that they may live!*

The *four ruḥot* are the four winds, four directions. On the verse in Ezekiel, see *Zohar* 1:139a (*MhN*), 175b–176a, 235a; 3:130b (*IR*).

284. **place from which the *ruaḥ*, spirit, issues** The origin of the human spirit, which according to this verse issues *from four ruḥot* (*winds*, or *directions*).

285. **could Ezekiel actually prophesy…** How could he order the spirit to *come*, when the verse in Ecclesiastes states that *no human has power over the spirit?* The verse concludes: *there is no power over the day of death*.

286. **spirit had been in a body…** Ezekiel was prophesying to the spirit of the dry bones, which had previously been in an earthly body; so he was able to command it to return.

“The place demarcated…” is the divine Throne, as explained below.

287. **spirit… clothed in the form of the body…** The spirit inhabits an ethereal body in the Garden of Eden, resembling its physical body in this world. See above, note 211.

288. **spirit does not descend…** Before entering a human body, the spirit ascends from the Garden of Eden to the divine Throne, from where it originally issued. There the spirit is infused with vitality from the four legs of the Throne, which are described as “supports, directions” and referred to in this verse from Ezekiel as *four ruḥot* (see above, note 283).

According to rabbinic tradition, the dust of Adam’s body was gathered from the four directions of the world. See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 2:7; *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 11; BT *Sanhedrin* 38a–b; *Zohar* 1:34b, 130b, 205b; 2:23b, 24b. Cf. 2 Enoch 30:13. Here, these four directions also symbolize the four elements (fire, air, water, and earth). See below, p. 83 and n. 49.

On the Throne as the origin of the soul, see *Zohar* 1:113a, 125b, 126b (all *MhN*); 2:211b. “Throne” may also allude to *Shekhinah*; and the “four directions,” to the sefirotic quartet of *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif’eret*, and *Shekhinah*, which are symbolized respectively by south, north, east, and west.

289. **aspect** סטרא (*Sitra*), “Side, direction, aspect.”

290. **desirable to look at…** דמרגג למחזי (*Dimraggag le-miḥzei*), a phrase borrowed from *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 2:9, describing the trees in the Garden of Eden. Cf. ibid. 3:6, where the Tree of Knowledge is described similarly.

The allusion to the Garden of Eden is reinforced by the reference to a cave, which sometimes appears in the *Zohar* as the entrance to the Garden. See Vol. 3, p. 321, n. 108.

291. **leaf…** A conjectural translation of קיסנא (*qisna*), which may be a metathesis of קינסא (*qinsa*), “twig, piece of wood.” The *Arukh* (s.v. *qsn*, quoting BT *Eruvin* 100b)

preserves a plural form קוסני (*qusnei*), which it defines as "leaves of the tree."

According to the *Zohar*, טרפי (*tarpei*), "leaves," of the Tree of Knowledge convey the knowledge of magic. See *Zohar* 1:36b, 53b, 56a, 63b. Cf. BT *Bava Metsi'a* 114b.

Alternatively, *qisna* could be rendered "fragment," based again on *qinsa*, "piece of wood," which is interpreted by Rashi as equivalent to קיסמא (*qeisma*), "chip." *Derekh Emet* (ed. Ḥamiẓ) emends the word to קטרא (*qitra*), "bond, bundle," which fits the context well (and is adopted by later editions) but has no support in any of the numerous MSS I have examined or in the early printed editions (Cremona and Mantua). See *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *qns, qsn*; Rashi, BT *Avodah Zarah* 33b, s.v. *qinsa*; *OY*; Scholem.

The motif of finding writings in a cave recurs in *Zohar* 1:117b–118a; *ZḤ* 53c–d. According to legend, the *Zohar* itself was composed or hidden in a cave. See *OḤ*, intro; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:19; Huss, "Hofa'ato shel 'Sefer ha-Zohar,'" 528.

According to rabbinic tradition, Rabbi Shim'on together with his son, Rabbi El'azar, hid from the Roman authorities in a cave for thirteen years. See JT *Shevi'it* 9:1, 38d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 79:6; BT *Shabbat* 33b, *Sanhedrin* 98a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:16; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 10:8; *Midrash Tehillim* 17:13; *Zohar* 1:11a–b, 216b, 244b; *ZḤ* 59c–60a.

292. **spirits of the righteous...** Who had departed from earth and were entering the Garden of Eden. The sounds he had heard were the voices of spirits already in the Garden, clothed in ethereal bodies resembling their earthly bodies; they were welcoming the newly arriving (or returning) spirits.

On the ethereal bodies, see above, note 211.

293. **Just as the body...** Just as the body is formed from the four elements (fire, air, earth, and water), so the spirit is formed from four spirits in the Garden deriving

from the divine Throne and is clothed in an ethereal body resembling its earthly body.

See above at notes 283–88.

294. **Companions…** Rabbi Abba and Rabbi Yose. See above at note 282.

295. **blessed Holy One put this verse in my mouth** "God arranged for me to open with this verse from Ezekiel, so that you would appear and reveal its deeper meaning." See above at note 283.

296. **He gave them…** The anonymous Jew gave the leaf of writing to the three rabbis. Rabbi El'azar saw it only briefly before it flew out of his hands.

"A branching brow" renders אפותא (*afuta*), "forehead, brow." The image here derives from BT *Ta'anit* 25a: "צוציתא (*Tsutsita*), a branch, of fire darted מאפותיה (*me-afuteih*), from his forehead." Here, the author substitutes the meaning of *tsutsita* (branch) for the meaning of *afuta* (forehead)—either playfully or mistakenly.

See Targum, Job 41:12; *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 16, p. 276, and Buber's note; *Zohar* 2:35a, 61b; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 173; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David* , s.v. *afuta de-qunta*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:66; Scholem. Cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 13a.

On the flying away of various forms of writing, see *Zohar* 1:7b, 55b; 3:167a; *ZḤ* 83d.

297. **Who can endure…** Who can withstand the power of such precious mysteries, or fathom them? From then on, Rabbi El'azar rejoiced but did not reveal what he had glimpsed.

"Endure" renders לקיימא ב (*le-qayyama be-*), literally, "stand in," but in the *Zohar* this idiom often means "fathom, understand, withstand, endure, abide." "Treasures" renders גנזיא (*ginzayya*), which in the *Zohar* can also mean "treasuries." Thus the phrase here could be translated: "Who can fathom treasures of the King?" or "Who can abide (in) the treasuries of the King?"

298. **Jacob fled…** Jacob fled from Esau to Haran, where he came upon a well, symbolizing *Shekhinah*. Since he had attained the rung of *Tif'eret* (*Shekhinah*'s partner), the waters of the well rose toward him, and there he appropriately met his mate, Rachel. Similarly with Moses, who fled from Pharaoh to Midian, where he came upon a well and met his mate, Zipporah.

See above, pp. 60–61, 63, and nn. 268–70, 281. Cf. *Zohar* 2:114b.

299. **difference between Moses and Jacob…** Each of them, inspired by his destined mate, performed a different heroic act. See *MM*.

Alternatively, Jacob saw only Rachel and understood that she was to be his wife, whereas Moses saw all seven of Jethro's daughters and nevertheless understood that Zipporah was his destined mate. See *MM*; *MmD*. Or, Jacob had to eliminate the harsh aspect of Judgment from *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the stone on the well), whereas Moses found the well of *Shekhinah* immediately accessible. See above, p. 63 and nn. 280–81; Galante. For other interpretations, see *OY*; *Sullam*.

The person who provided for Jacob was Laban. The full verse in Genesis reads: *When Jacob saw Rachel, daughter of his uncle Laban, and the sheep of his uncle Laban, he approached and rolled the stone off the mouth of the well and watered the sheep of his uncle Laban*. The verse in Exodus concludes: *and watered their flock*.

300. **Jethro was an idolatrous priest…** See *Shemot Rabbah* 1:32 (2, 4); *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 11; *Zohar* 3:122a, 196b–197a.

301. **escorted him three miles…** Out of respect. According to Rav Sheshet (BT *Sotah* 46b), one should escort his teacher a distance of a parasang. A distinguished teacher, however, is to be escorted for three parasangs. (The Persian parasang equals about 3.5 modern miles. The

term here in the *Zohar*, מלין [*milin*], "miles," refers to the Roman mile, slightly shorter than the modern mile.)

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 18:5; *Bereshit Rabbah* 32:10; *Zohar* 1:51a, 87a, 96b, 150b, 217a; 2:164a, 187a; 3:8b. "Escorted him" renders אוזפוה (*ozefuh*), which in normal Aramaic means "lent him"; but the Hebrew verb להלוות (*le-halvot*), "to lend," is a homonym of *le-halvot*, "to escort," and the author(s) of the *Zohar*—either playfully or mistakenly—employ(s) the Aramaic verb לאוזפא (*le-ozafa*) in this sense. Cf. the English idiom "to lend an escort." See below, p. 209 and n. 33.

302. ***They said, "An Egyptian man…"*** The full verse reads: *They said, "An Egyptian man rescued us from the hands of the shepherds, and he even drew water for us and watered the flock."*

303. **Holy Spirit sparkled within them…** When Jethro's daughters said *an Egyptian man rescued us*, they were inspired though unaware of the deeper meaning of their words: unwittingly, they were referring not to Moses but to the *Egyptian man* whom Moses has killed (Exodus 2:11–12). Because of that deed, Moses fled to Midian, where he saved Jethro's daughters; so, in effect, it was that *Egyptian man* who *rescued* them!

The parable implies that just as the bear, in effect, fed the man by chasing the lamb in his direction, so the *Egyptian man* rescued Jethro's daughters by forcing Moses to flee the scene of the homicide and head for Midian. See Galante; *Sullam*. For other interpretations, see *OY*; *MM*; *MmD*.

Rabbi Ḥiyya attributes this interpretation of *an Egyptian man rescued us* to "the Companions," namely to the author(s) of a midrash that appears in *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 11 (and *Shemot Rabbah* 1:32 [9]), conveyed by a similar yet simpler parable: "This can be compared to one who was bitten by a lizard and ran to put his feet in the water. He entered a river, where he saw a child drowning,

and he stretched out his hand and brought him up. That child said to him, ‘If not for you, I’d be dead!’ He replied, ‘It’s not me who saved you, but that lizard who bit me, from whom I fled to the water—he saved you!’ Similarly, Jethro’s daughters said to Moses, ‘May your strength be firm! For you saved us from the hand of the shepherds.’ Moses replied, ‘That Egyptian whom I killed—he saved you!’ Therefore, they said to their father, ‘*An Egyptian man*. Who caused this one to come to us? *An Egyptian man* whom he killed.’”

1. **[22a]...** The material from *Zohar* 2:14a (top) to 22a (top) belongs to *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* and will be translated in a supplementary volume.

See *OY*, 76; *NZ* on 2:14a, n. 4; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:2, 105, n. 8; Scholem on 2:14a; idem, *Kabbalah*, 217.

2. ***for Yah YHVH...*** The verse reads literally *for in Yah YHVH is an eternal rock*.

3. **strengthen themselves...** לאתתקפא (*Le-ittaqqafa*), "to strengthen oneself, to hold fast."

4. **what is עדי עד (*adei ad*), *forever and ever*?...** The question may be motivated by the apparently superfluous quality of this phrase (since one should of course trust in God constantly), or by the literal meaning of *adei*, "until, as far as" (since this seems to imply a limitation).

Rabbi Abba explains that one's trust should extend *adei ad*, "as far as *ad*." Literally, *ad* means "eternity," but here it apparently alludes to *Tif'eret*, core of the *sefirot*, linking and sustaining the entire configuration of *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*.

The verse in Genesis reads: *Benjamin, a ravening wolf, in the morning consuming ad, prey, at evening dividing the spoil*. The homonym *ad* means literally "prey, booty, enemy," but the verse is reinterpreted to mean *in the morning ad* [*Tif'eret*] *consumes* [the flow stimulated by human blessings and offerings]; *at evening* [*Shekhinah*] *divides the spoil* [among all those below].

On *ad*, see *Zohar* 1:50a, 150a, 161b–162a, 228a, 247b–248a. According to Vital, *ad* designates *Yesod*.

5. **all sides...** Right and left, above and below.

6. ***Ad is desire of hills of the world...*** The verse reads: *The blessings of your father surpass the blessings of my ancestors*, עד תאות גבעות עולם (*ad ta'avat giv'ot olam*). This last, difficult phrase may mean *as great as* [literally, "as far as"] *the bounty* [literally, "desire," that which is desired] *of eternal hills*.

Here Rabbi Abba follows the literal meaning of *ta'avat*, "desire of." As for *olam* (which in biblical Hebrew means "eternity"), he adopts its later meaning: "world." The two *hills of the world* are the two divine mothers, *Binah* and *Shekhinah*, each one a divine world. *Binah* gives birth to the lower *sefirot* (*Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*); *Shekhinah* gives birth to the lower worlds. Both of them feel desire toward *Tif'eret*; thus, *ad* [*Tif'eret*] *is desire of hills of the world*.

Binah is known as Jubilee, *Shekhinah* as Sabbatical. See above, p. 55, n. 243. On the verse in Genesis, see *Zohar* 1:50a, 247b; 3:203b. On *hills* as mothers, see *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Beshallaḥ*) 1; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 353; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:6; *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Genesis 49:26; JT *Sanhedrin* 10:1, 27d; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 11a; *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 49:26; *Zohar* 2:112a–b.

The simple sense of the phrase in Psalms is *from eternity to eternity*. On the meaning *from world to world*, see M *Berakhot* 9:5; *Tosefta Berakhot* 6:21; *Zohar* 1:34a, 153b, 158b, 210a, 248b; 2:53b, 144a; 3:145b, 285b, 297b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 342–43.

7. **Desire of Jubilee...** *Binah*, the Divine Mother, yearns to pour the blessings of emanation upon Her son, *Tif'eret*. *Shekhinah*, the Divine Bride, yearns to be illumined by uniting with Him.

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *O daughters of Zion, come out and gaze upon King Solomon, upon the crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding, on the day of his heart's delight*. In Kabbalah this verse alludes to the wedding of *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Solomon) with *Shekhinah*, in which *Binah* participates and rejoices.

On the verse, see M *Ta'anit* 4:8: "*On the day of his wedding*—this is the giving of the Torah. *On the day of his heart's delight*—this is the building of the Temple, may it be rebuilt speedily in our days. Amen." See *Sifra, Shemini, millu'im*, 15, 44c; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 33; *Pesiqta de-*

Rav Kahana 1:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; Naḥmanides on Genesis 24:1; *Zohar* 1:29b, 218a, 246a, 248b; 2:58a, 84a, 100b; 3:61b.

8. ***adei, as far as, ad…*** One should trust in, and cultivate a relationship with, God until the realm of *Tif'eret*, including all the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* and below. Higher than this is the concealed and incomprehensible realm of the highest *sefirot* (*Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*), from which all worlds issued.

The verse in Isaiah reads literally: *For* ביה (*be-Yah*), *in Yah, YHVH is an eternal rock*. However, the preposition ב (*be*) can mean "in, with, by," and the divine name *Yah YHVH* designates *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* (or *Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*). Rabbi Abba reconfigures the phrase צור עולמים (*tsur olamim*), *an eternal rock*, into צייר עולמים (*tsiyyer olamim*), *He formed worlds*. Now the verse reads: *For by Yah YHVH* [i.e., by means of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*], *He* [*Ein Sof* or *Keter*] *formed worlds*. (Or, by means of *Keter, Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*, *He* [*Ein Sof*] *formed worlds*.)

See below, note 11. "Hidden from all" renders גניז מכלא (*geniz mi-kola*), which can also be translated "totally hidden."

9. ***For ask now…*** The verse concludes: *has anything as great as this ever happened or has its like been heard?* The reference is to God's redeeming Israel from Egypt and revealing Himself to them at Mount Sinai.

In BT *Ḥagigah* 11b, this verse is interpreted as imposing a limit on cosmological speculation: "You may inquire concerning *from one end of heaven to the other*, but you may not inquire concerning what is above, what is below, what came before, what will come after." These restrictions on speculation recall the Gnostic striving after "the knowledge of who we were, what we have become, where we were, where we have been thrown, where we hasten, from what we are redeemed, what birth is and what rebirth" (Clement of Alexandria, *Excerpts from Theodotus* 78:2).

In Kabbalah the *primal days* allude to the cosmic days of Creation, from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod*, whose core is *Tif'eret*, known

as *heaven*. This entire realm, *from one end of heaven to the other*, is open to contemplative questioning; everything beyond is incomprehensible.

See M *Ḥagigah* 2:1; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:10; *Zohar* 1:1b, 30a, 85b–86a, 141b, 158a; 2:93a, 232a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 31 (36–37); idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 20, 375; idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 371.

10. **Alternatively, *Trust… forever and ever…*** According to the simple sense of *adei ad*, *forever and ever*.

"Be harmed or shamed" renders לאבאשא ליה (*le-av'asha leih*), which means "to harm him," but plays on אל אבושה (*al evoshah*), *let me not be shamed*.

11. **צור עולמים (*tsur olamim*)…** Rabbi Yehudah reads the verse: *For* ביה (*be-Yah*), *by* [the letters] י ה (*yod, he*), *YHVH* עולמים צייר (*tsiyyer olamim*), *formed worlds*. See above, note 8.

This interpretation of the verse derives from BT *Menaḥot* 29b, according to which God created this world with ה (*he*) and the world that is coming with י (*yod*).

See *Midrash Aggadah*, Genesis 1:1; *Tosafot* on *Berakhot* 51a, s.v. *zokheh*. On *tsur* and *tsiyyer*, see *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:4; cf. *Mekhilta, Shirta* 8; BT *Berakhot* 10a.

12. **This world was created by Justice…** Without justice, the moral order would disintegrate.

Justice corresponds to the letter ה (*he*), which symbolizes *Shekhinah* (as well as *Binah*). The name *Elohim* can refer to either of these *sefirot*, as well as to the *sefirah* of *Din* (Justice, or Judgment), which issues from *Binah* and influences *Shekhinah*.

On justice as the basis of the world, see M *Avot* 1:18; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 43; *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:1; *Shemot Rabbah* 30:13; *Zohar* 1:180b; 2:122a; 3:30b, 32a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 291, 345. On *Elohim* as indicating Justice, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:6; Naḥmanides on Deuteronomy 3:24. "Endures through" renders קיימא…על

(*qayema...al*), which means literally “stands on,” the same idiom that appears in M *Avot* 1:18.

13. ***Elohim*... decree of Judgment...** *Shekhinah*, in Her aspect of Judgment, confronted Moses in response to his bold accusation. (She is known as both *Elohim* and *Adonai*.) Moses’ boldness is explained by the fact that he was destined for a higher rung: *Tif’eret*, husband of *Shekhinah*.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 6:1–3; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:7.

14. **when the house was given to him...** *Shekhinah* contains the flow of emanation from above, specifically from *Tif’eret*, so She is pictured as His house. Moses, who attained the rung of *Tif’eret*, was given this divine house and could therefore command Her fearlessly.

See Numbers 12:7: *In all My house he* [Moses] *is trusted*. See *Zohar* 1:148a; below, note 17. According to rabbinic exegesis, “house” implies “wife.” See M *Yoma* 1:1.

15. ***Elohim*... decree of Judgment...** *Shekhinah*, known as *Elohim* and characterized by Judgment, responded harshly to Moses’ bold criticism. (See above, note 13). Therefore, in the first half of the verse, the intense verb וידבר (*vaydabber*), *he spoke*, accompanies the name *Elohim*. The second half of the verse employs a gentler verb, ויאמר (*va-yomer*), *he said*, matching the divine name *YHVH*, which signifies Compassion. Thus, according to Rabbi Yitsḥak, the verse combines both of these divine qualities.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 6:1–3; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:7. On *Elohim* and *YHVH* as respectively indicating Justice and Compassion, see also *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:6. On the distinction between the verbs *vaydabber* and *va-yomer*, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 99; BT *Makkot* 10b–11a; *Leqaḥ Tov* and *Sekhel Tov* on Exodus 6:2.

16. **If it were written...** If the verse intended to link Judgment (*Elohim*) and Compassion (*YHVH*), then it would have consisted of one continuous sentence. The presence of two

subjects (*Elohim* and *He*) indicates rather that first *Shekhinah* spoke, and then *Tif'eret*.

17. **master of the house, husband of *Elohim*...** Husband of *Shekhinah*, who is known as "house" and *Elohim*. Consequently, Moses was allowed to speak to Her as he wished.

Moses' title איש האלהים (*ish ha-Elohim*), *man of God* (Deuteronomy 33:1; Psalms 90:1), is understood midrashically as "husband of God" (able to command Him) and kabbalistically as "husband of *Shekhinah*" (united with Her).

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana, nispaḥim, Vezot Haberakhah*, 443–44, 448 (variants); *Tanḥuma, Vezot Haberakhah* 2 (*Ets Yosef*, ad loc.); *Devarim Rabbah* (Lieberman) on 33:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:5; *Zohar* 1:6b, 21b–22a, 148a, 152a–b, 192b, 236b; 239a; 2:235b, 238b, 244b (*Heikh*); 3:261b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 25; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 101–2 (129), apparently alluding to the context here.

According to rabbinic tradition, after encountering God on Mount Sinai, Moses abstained from sexual contact with his wife and maintained union with *Shekhinah*.

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 99; BT *Shabbat* 87a; *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10; *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 13; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 7:6; *Zohar* 1:22a, 152b, 234b; 2:222a; 3:148a, 180a, 261b; *ZḤ* 59b, 72d (*ShS*). On *Shekhinah* as "house," see above, note 14.

18. ***Adonai, My Lord...*** Moses speaks harshly to *Shekhinah* (known as *Adonai* and *Elohim*). As She begins to reply, *Tif'eret* (*YHVH*) takes up the word, telling Moses that by impugning *Shekhinah*, he has affronted *YHVH*. See above at notes 13–16.

19. ***I appeared...*** The verse concludes: *but by My name YHVH I was not known to them*. Rabbi Yose wonders why the name *El Shaddai* is mentioned here rather than one of the names recorded in the preceding verses: *Adonai* or *Elohim*.

The obscure divine name אל שדי (*El Shaddai*) may originally have meant "God of the mountain." Its full form appears in the Bible only in connection with the patriarchs.

20. **this can be compared to a king...** See *Bahir* 43 (63): "A parable. This can be compared to a king residing within the innermost chambers, thirty-two in all, each with its own path. Now, is it fitting for this king that everyone enter his chambers by his paths? Certainly not! But is it fitting for him not to display his pearls and hidden treasures, his precious objects and brocades? Certainly not! What did he do? He designated the daughter and included all the paths in her and in her garments. Whoever wishes to enter, let him gaze here!"

Cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:10; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:10; *Zohar* 2:51a.

21. **Highness of Wisdom...** A conjectural rendering of קרוסופינא (*qerosophina*), a Zoharic neologism perhaps deriving from Greek *kyrios*, "lord," and *sophia*, "wisdom."

On the association between *Shekhinah* and *kyrios*, see *Zohar* 1:228b; Vol. 3, p. 377, n. 391. For rabbinic knowledge of *kyrios*, see BT *Avodah Zarah* 11b, *Ḥullin* 139b. On *Shekhinah* as Wisdom (or lower Wisdom), see above, p. 58 and n. 255. On this neologism, see *OY*; *Ma'arikh*, s.v. *qerosophanya*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qerospina;* Scholem. Cf. *Zohar* 2:68a.

מטרוניתא (*Matronita*) is an aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron, married woman, noble lady," and is often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the divine spouse.

22. **Similarly, *'I appeared...'*** God appeared to His "beloved friends," the patriarchs, by channeling words and visions through *Shekhinah*, who, before She was married, was known specifically as *El Shaddai*. Moses, however, had direct contact with God, attaining the rung of *Tif'eret* and uniting with *Shekhinah*. How, then, could he speak to Her so accusingly: *Adonai, why have You done evil to this people?...*

You surely have not rescued Your people! (Exodus 5:22–23)?

On God marrying off His daughter, see the parable in *Shemot Rabbah* 6:3. On God speaking with Moses face-to-face, see Exodus 33:11; Deuteronomy 34:10.

23. ***Of David. A psalm…*** The verse concludes: *the world and those who dwell in her*. אֶרֶץ (*Arets*) means both "earth" and "land." For Rabbi Yeisa, the word implies the land of Israel, symbolizing *Shekhinah*, who is first watered by *YHVH* (*Tif'eret*) and then proceeds to water the worlds below, eventually including the rest of earth outside the land of Israel. ("Land of Israel" may imply here *Shekhinah* [land] possessed by *Tif'eret*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el*, "Beauty of Israel.")

See BT *Ta'anit* 10a: "The land of Israel is watered by the blessed Holy One Himself, while the rest of the world is watered by a messenger…. The land of Israel drinks water directly from the rain, while the rest of the world drinks of the drippings [Munich MS: of the land of Israel]…. The land of Israel drinks first, and the whole world afterward."

See *Zohar* 1:84b, 109a; 2:152b; 3:209b; Naḥmanides on Deuteronomy 11:10–12. On the verse in Psalm 24, see 1:67a; 2:50a; 3:45b.

The verse in Psalm 9 is understood to mean that *Tif'eret judges the world* through *Shekhinah*, known as *righteousness*.

24. **seven pillars… seas…** *Shekhinah* (the earth) is the consummation of the seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah* Herself, which are pictured both as pillars and seas. She depends upon the *sefirot* above Her; yet as the Sea of Galilee, She controls and conveys the entire flow of emanation.

On the seven pillars, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; above, p. 44 and n. 191. On the seven seas, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 18: "The blessed Holy One created seven seas, and of them all He chose the Sea of Kinneret [Galilee]." See JT *Kil'ayim* 9:4, 32c; BT *Bava Batra* 74b; *Midrash Tehillim* 24:6 (all

quoting Psalms 24:2). On *Shekhinah* as the Sea of Galilee, see *Zohar* 3:150a.

25. **Do not say 'rules…'** Rabbi Yehudah objects to this wording, because *Shekhinah* does not control the *sefirot* above Her but is rather filled by them.

26. **Who are *rivers*?…** These are the powerful sefirotic streams issuing from the river of *Binah*, who Herself issues from *Ḥokhmah* (known as *Eden*) *to water the garden* of *Shekhinah*.

27. **Why did Jacob… not rule…** Since Jacob is called Israel, why did he not attain fully the rung of *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel) and become the complete master of *Shekhinah*, Land of Israel? According to Exodus 6:2, God appeared to the patriarchs as *El Shaddai*, namely, *Shekhinah, but by My name YHVH* [signifying *Tif'eret*] *I was not known to them*.

The answer is that Jacob "possessed the house below"—he married Leah and Rachel (along with their maids, Zilpah and Bilhah)—and therefore never attained complete union with "the house above," the divine wife, *Shekhinah*, although as a result of his marriages he did array Her with the twelve tribes and his seventy descendants. Moses, on the other hand, after encountering God on Mount Sinai, abstained from sexual contact with his wife and maintained union with *Shekhinah*, becoming "husband of *Elohim*."

See *Zohar* 1:21b–22a, 236a–b; above, notes 17, 22. On *Shekhinah* and the twelve tribes, see *Zohar* 1:158a, 174a, 225b, 231b, 240b–241a, 246a–b; 2:229b–230a; 3:62a, 118b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 8. On Jacob's seventy descendants, see Exodus 1:5.

28. **Glory of the Patriarchs…** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 76:1, in the name of Rabbi Re'uven: "The chosen of the patriarchs is Jacob, as is said: *For Yah has chosen Jacob for Himself* (Psalms 135:4)."

Jacob symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who harmonizes and completes the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, symbolized respectively by Abraham and Isaac.

See *Zohar* 1:119b, 133a, 144b, 150a, 152a (*ST*), 163b, 171b, 172b, 173b, 180a, 207a; 2:26a, 48b. On Jacob being complete, see *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 8:7, 112c; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 31, 312; *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 25:27; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:5; BT *Pesaḥim* 56a.

29. **אל (*el*), *to*...ואל (*ve-el*), *and to*...** The letter ו (*vav*) signifies more here than simply *and*; its numerical value of six alludes to the *sefirah* attained by Jacob, *Tif'eret*, together with the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). However, even though Jacob was the most complete of all the patriarchs, he did not attain the same intimacy with *Shekhinah* as did Moses, who embodied *Tif'eret* more fully.

See above, note 27. On *ve-el*, see *Zohar* 2:26a. "In wielding" renders לאשתמשא (*leishtammasha*), "to use, perform," and (based on rabbinic idiomatic usage) "to have sexual relations."

30. ***I also established My covenant with them...*** Through circumcision, one enters the covenant and becomes worthy of dwelling in the Holy Land. The covenant of circumcision symbolizes *Yesod*, the divine phallus, known as Righteous One; by the act of circumcision, one becomes righteous and attains intimacy with *Yesod*'s partner, *Shekhinah, the land*.

In rabbinic literature Joseph is granted the title Righteous in recognition of resisting the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife. See Genesis 39; BT *Yoma* 35b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 93:7; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana, nispaḥim*, 460. Cf. *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 5, and *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 38, which cite Amos 2:6.

According to the *Zohar*, Joseph's sexual purity enabled him to scale the sefirotic ladder and attain the rung of *Yesod*.

Yesod is known as Righteous, based on Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*). The verse in its simple sense means *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, but it is understood as *The righteous one is the*

foundation of the world. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34.

On circumcision and inheriting the land, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29; *Zohar* 1:59b, 216a; 2:26a, 59b. Liebes has suggested that here the *Zohar* may be alluding to the Crusades and the struggle over the Holy Land, insisting that neither Christians (who are uncircumcised) nor Muslims (whose circumcision is incomplete) are entitled to inherit the land of Israel. See Liebes, "Zakka'in Innun Yisra'el," at nn. 52–55; below, pp. 304–5, n. 375.

On circumcision and righteousness, see *Zohar* 1:59b, 94a, 216a, 247b; 2:26a, 59b. The wording in Exodus 6:4, הקימותי (*haqimoti*), *I established, My covenant*, can also be rendered *I erected My covenant*, alluding to the arousal of *Yesod* toward *Shekhinah*, which is brought about by human righteousness. See *Zohar* 1:59b, 66b; 2:26a; Moses de León, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 381–82; *Haggahot Maharḥu*.

The verse from Isaiah appears dozens of times in the *Zohar*. In M *Sanhedrin* 10:1, it is quoted to demonstrate that "all of Israel have a share in the world that is coming."

31. **why *I appeared*?...** Rabbi El'azar contends that language rather than vision is the essential medium of revelation. See Deuteronomy 4:12: *YHVH spoke to you from the midst of the fire: the sound of words you hear, an image you do not see—only a voice!*

See Exodus 20:15; *Zohar* 2:81a. The full verse in Exodus 6 reads: *I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El Shaddai, but by My name YHVH I was not known to them*.

32. **Colors of *El Shaddai*...** The sefirotic spectrum displayed by *Shekhinah*, who is known as *El Shaddai*. She reflects the colors of the *sefirot* above Her—specifically, white, red, and green, which are associated respectively with *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*.

"Visionary mirror" renders חיזו (*ḥeizu*), which means "vision, appearance," but in the *Zohar* also "mirror." Cf. the Hebrew word מראה (*mar'ah*), which means both "vision" and "mirror." See *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Exodus 38:8; *Zohar* 1:88b, 91a, 149b, 183a, 196a, 203a; 2:70b, 221a, 267a.

On *El Shaddai*, see above, pp. 75–76, and nn. 19, 22. On colors in Kabbalah, see Scholem, "Colours and Their Symbolism."

33. **colors above...** The patriarchs saw the colors of the *sefirot* as reflected in *Shekhinah*, but they could not gaze at them directly. Moses, however, attained fully the rung of *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*), who includes all of the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. His vision of the colors was unmediated.

On the invisibility of these colors, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 36.

34. **Who are *the enlightened*?...** In the book of Daniel this term apparently designates the community of those who shared the prophet's vision. In medieval literature it can refer to either philosophers or, as here, to kabbalists.

See *Bahir* 95 (139); *Zohar* 1:15a–16a; 2:2a; *ZḤ* 58c (*QhM*), 93d–94b (*Tiq*), 105a (*Tiq*), 105c (*Tiq*), 106b (*Tiq*); Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 224; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 379, 383–84; Liebes, "Zohar ve-Eros," 73–75. On the phrase "on his own," see M *Ḥagigah* 2:1, according to which it is forbidden to teach an individual the secrets relating to Ezekiel's chariot unless that person is "wise and understands on his own [literally: from his own knowledge]."

35. **sky of Moses...** The level of *Tif'eret*, attained by Moses, which balances right and left. *Tif'eret* stands above *Shekhinah*, the sky in which the sefirotic colors can be seen, though not in their full brilliance.

The *zohar* of Moses' sky refers to the "radiance" of his *sefirah, Tif'eret*; but it may also allude to the *Zohar* of Moses de

León, concealed and disguised as an ancient midrash. See Vol. 1, introduction, pp. liv–lviii.

36. **four lights…** Corresponding to four *sefirot*. "A shining light" is *Ḥesed*. "A light of radiance" is *Gevurah*. "A light of purple, absorbing…" is *Tif'eret*, who blends *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. (Being King, His color is royal purple.) "A light that does not shine" is *Shekhinah*, who has no light of Her own but reflects or refracts these other lights.

See Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 96–97 (123–24). "Crystal" renders עשישתא (*ashishta*), "bar of metal, glass, glass lantern." See *Zohar* 1:33b; 2:82a, 130b, 221a; *ZḤ* 41c, 63b (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 69 (87), 97 (124); *OY*; *Arukh ha-Shalem*, and Ben-Yehuda, *Dictionary*, s.v. עששית (*ashashit*); *Sullam*; *MmD*. The phrase "like the heavens in purity" derives from Exodus 24:10.

37. **This mystery is the eye…** The colors of the eye (e.g., the white of the sclera and the color of the iris) correspond to the muted colors seen within *Shekhinah* ("the light that does not shine," corresponding to the pupil), which are patterned on the more vibrant yet concealed colors of the higher *sefirot*.

On significance of the eye, see *Derekh Erets Zuta* 9:13 (*Derekh Erets*, ed. Higger, 7:38), in the name of Samuel the Small: "This world resembles a human eyeball. The white in it [i.e., the sclera] is the ocean, surrounding the whole world. The black in it [i.e., the iris] is the [inhabited] world. The pit in the black [i.e., the pupil] is Jerusalem. The visage in the pit [i.e., the reflection of one's own "face" seen in the pupil of another person's eye] is the Temple, may it be rebuilt speedily in our days and in the days of all Israel. Amen."

See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 60, 95; *Zohar* 1:97a–b (*ST*), 226a; 2:222b; 3:169a.

38. **Close your eye and turn your eyeball…** A technique for seeing colors. By closing one's eyes and pressing a finger on the eyeball until it moves, colors of the

spectrum appear, corresponding to the concealed sefirotic colors.

See *Zohar* 1:18b, 42a (*Heikh*), 43a (*Heikh*), 97a–b (*ST*); 2:43b (*Piq*), 69a, 247a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 96–97 (123–24); *OY*; Galante; Scholem, "Colours and Their Symbolism," 66–67; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 291–93; Blumenthal, *Understanding Jewish Mysticism*, 136; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 380–83. The expression "shut and concealed" renders סתימין (*setimin*), which means both.

39. **'Moses attained the speculum that shines'...** אספקלריא (*Ispaqlarya*) means "speculum, glass, mirror, lens," deriving from Greek *speklon*, "mirror, window-pane," and Latin *speculum*, "mirror."

See BT *Yevamot* 49b: "All the prophets gazed through an opaque glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that does not shine], whereas Moses our teacher gazed through a translucent glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that shines]."

In the *Zohar*, *Shekhinah* is the speculum that does not shine on its own but rather reflects and transmits the other *sefirot*. She is the medium through which prophets normally perceive a sefirotic vision. The patriarchs glimpsed—through the revealed colors of *Shekhinah*—the higher, concealed colors. Moses, however, attained the rung of *Tif'eret* (*YHVH*), corresponding to "the speculum that shines," and was able to gaze directly at the concealed colors.

Cf. 1 Corinthians 13:12: "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face-to-face." See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 1:14; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 33–34; Naḥmanides on Exodus 6:2; *Zohar* 1:33b, 120a, 183a; 2:221a; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:44–45, n. 242; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, index, s.v. "speculum"; Huss, "Ḥakham Adif mi-Navi," 109–14.

40. **Mystery of the eye: concealed and revealed...** The higher colors of the speculum that shines can be seen and *known* only with the eye closed ("concealed"), whereas

the lower colors of the speculum that does not shine correspond to the colors that appear in the open eye.

41. **orphaned of you…** See Rabbi Akiva's exclamation at the death of Rabbi Eli'ezer son of Hurkanos (*Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 25): "Woe unto me, my master, because of you! Woe unto me, my teacher, because of you! For you have left the whole generation orphaned!"

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 16; *Zohar* 1:99a (*MhN*); 2:68a; 3:100b, 232b, 236a; *ZḤ* 7a, 19c (both *MhN*).

42. ***Say: Thus for life…*** King David's greeting to Nabal, a wealthy man who arrogantly refused to help David when he fled from Saul. In 1 Samuel 25:3, Nabal is described as an evildoer, so Rabbi Abba wonders why David would have greeted him with a blessing.

43. **that day was… Rosh Hashanah…** As taught in the name of Rabbah son of Avuha in BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 18a. Since Rosh Hashanah is the Day of Judgment, David sought to join *Shekhinah* (known as *koh*, "thus") to *Yesod* (known as *ḥai*, "the living one"), thereby ensuring that vitality would flow to the world on this fateful day.

See 1 Samuel 25:8, 38; *Zohar* 3:104a.

44. **Why *ve-attah, And you*?…** The prefix *ve* (*and*) seems superfluous. However, this word too alludes to the divine union: the letter ו (*vav*) symbolizes *Tif'eret* (see above, note 29), while *attah* (*you*) indicates *Shekhinah*, who as the Presence can be addressed directly. David intended these words for God, not for Nabal.

See *Zohar* 1:171b. On *attah* and *ve-attah*, see *Zohar* 1:15b, 37a, 154b, 158b, 169a, 198a, 205b; 2:70a (*RR*), 104a, 138b, 140a, 154b, 158b, 179b, 221a, 261a (*Heikh*); 3:199a. Cf. 3:193b.

45. **forbidden to greet a wicked person first…** Before that person extends a greeting.

See *Kallah Rabbati* 3:1; *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Margaliot, par. 51 (and on the question of deception, Margaliot's n. 5); *Zohar* 1:171b, 205a. Cf. BT *Shevu'ot* 35b.

46. **whoever greets a righteous person…** See JT *Eruvin* 5:1, 22b, in the name of Rabbi Zeira: “Whoever greets his teacher is considered as if he greeted *Shekhinah*.”

“All the more so my master” means “All the more so, one who greets Rabbi Shim’on,” who attained the rung of *Yesod*, known as “peace,” and brought peace to the world.

Yesod is called “peace” because He creates harmony by uniting *Tif’eret* with *Shekhinah*. See BT *Shabbat* 152a, where Rabbi Shim’on son of Ḥalafta refers to the phallus as “peacemaker of the home.” See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1; *Zohar* 1:150b, 193b, 197b; 3:31a, 115b.

47. ***Happy is the human…*** The verse concludes: *and in whose spirit there is no deceit*.

48. **not knowing or contemplating…** See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b: “Rabbi Yose said, ‘Woe to creatures, for they see but do not know what they see; they stand but do not know on what they stand!’”

See *Zohar* 1:99a, 175b, 195b, 203b, 224a, 226b; 2:142a; 3:77a.

49. **He formed the human being…** Rabbi Ḥizkiyah combines several motifs. See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 11: “He began gathering the dust of Adam [see Genesis 2:7] from the four corners of the earth.” Cf. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 12: “He created him from a pure, holy site. From where did He take him? From the site of the Temple.”

Here in the *Zohar*, the four directions (south, north, east, and west) are linked with the four elements (water, fire, air, and earth [or dust]), which often symbolize the four *sefirot Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif’eret*, and *Shekhinah*. The human being is a microcosm, including aspects of the entire world and modeled on the sefirotic structure (“designed… in His array”).

See 2 Enoch 30:13; JT *Nazir* 7:2, 56b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:8 (and Theodor’s note); BT *Sanhedrin* 38a–b; *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 3; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 2:7; *Zohar* 1:34b,

130b, 205b; 2:13b; 3:46b, 83a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 344.

On the human being's creation in the image of God, see Genesis 1:26–27. On the human as microcosm, see *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 3; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 31; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:4; Donnolo, *Sefer Ḥakhmoni*, 63d–66b; Joseph ibn Ẓaddik, *Sefer ha-Olam ha-Qatan*; *Zohar* 1:90b, 134b, 186b; 2:75b. On the Temple as the center of the world, see *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 10.

The theory of the four elements was introduced by Empedocles and adopted by Plato, Aristotle, and most of their successors. It dominated Western cosmology until the Renaissance. According to this theory, everything below the sphere of the moon is composed of fire, air, water, and earth, all of which interact and are capable of transforming into one another.

See Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* 2:1–8; *Sefer Yetsirah* 3:3–4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:10–11; 4:1–6; *Zohar* 1:5b, 80a (*ST*); 2:13b; 3:170a.

For a close parallel to this entire passage (extending to p. 89), see Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 93–96 (119–22). On the al-chemical symbolism, see Scholem, *Alchemie und Kabbala*, 26–31. Cf. Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* 2:2, 8b.

50. **four are primordial ones...** Rabbi Shim'on explains that the four elements (fire, air, water, and earth [or dust]) symbolize respectively four primordial sefirotic elements: *Gevurah, Tif'eret, Ḥesed*, and *Shekhinah*. These four *sefirot* (identified respectively with the three patriarchs and King David) constitute a chariot for *Binah* and engender all the lower worlds and all created being. From them issue four metals: gold from *Gevurah*, silver from *Ḥesed*, copper from *Tif'eret*, and iron from *Shekhinah*. The origin of "other metals" is explained below.

On fathers and elements, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 3:2–4. On the fathers and the chariot, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6: “Resh Lakish said, ‘The fathers [i.e., the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob] themselves constitute the [divine] Chariot.’” On the sefirotic origin of various metals, cf. *Ma’arekhet ha-Elohut*, 12, 165b. On the relation between various metals and properties (hot, cold, wet, and dry), see Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha’ar ha-Shamayim* 2:2, 10b–11b.

51. **Fire to the north…** Fire is linked with *Gevurah* and north, air with *Tif’eret* and east, water with *Ḥesed* and south, dust with *Shekhinah* and west. The four elements, the four directions, and the four metals constitute a total of twelve aspects.

On *Shekhinah* as dust, see *Zohar* 1:49a, 170a, 249b–250a; 3:34b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 344–45; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 171; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 57–58, 62, 93–96 (70–71, 77–78, 118–22).

52. **Fire is left…** Each of the four elements is characterized by a pair of properties from among the contraries hot and cold, wet and dry. Fire is hot and dry, water cold and wet, air hot and wet, earth cold and dry. Further, fire is associated with *Gevurah* on the left side and with north; water is associated with *Ḥesed* on the right side and with south. North is the opposite of fire because it is characterized as cold and wet; these two opposites (north and fire) were blended, both symbolizing *Gevurah*. Similarly, south is the opposite of water because it is characterized as hot and dry; these two opposites (south and water) were blended, both symbolizing *Ḥesed*.

“He switched them to the south” means that God switched the hot and dry characteristics of fire to the south, from which heat issues to the world. Further, God blended the opposites of south (hot and dry) and water (cold and wet), so that water issues from the south and then enters the north (symbolizing *Gevurah*), from which it flows to the

world. Cf. the expression גבורות גשמים (*gevurot geshamim*), "the power of rain," in M *Berakhot* 5:2.

"Similarly, air and east…" apparently refers to air's characteristics, hot and wet, which derive respectively from the opposites fire (in the north) and water (in the south).

See Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* 2:3; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 4:2; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 94 (119); idem, Commentary on the Ten *Sefirot*, 367a. See Galante's diagram.

53. **Fire from this side…** Fire (symbolizing *Gevurah* on the left) and water (symbolizing *Ḥesed* on the right) are in conflict, until *ruaḥ* ("wind, air, spirit," symbolizing *Tif'eret*) mediates between them.

Fire "stands above" because it is pictured as the lightest of the four elements. On air mediating between fire and water, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 3:3; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 94 (119). On the phrase "mediating the conflict," see *Zohar* 1:16b–17b, 19b; 2:167a.

54. **As for dust…** Above dust (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) stand water, air, and fire (symbolizing respectively *Ḥesed, Tif'eret*, and *Gevurah*). Water, air, and the fire of the sun all provide essential ingredients to the dust of the earth, enabling her to yield vegetation. Similarly, all the three higher *sefirot* emanate into *Shekhinah*, enabling Her to generate life below. On *Shekhinah* as dust, see above, note 51.

55. **Air and east…** Air symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who is associated with the east. East is characterized as hot and wet because of its proximity to the south (which is hot) and to the north (which is wet). Similarly, according to the theory of the four elements, air is characterized as hot and wet (see above, note 52). This enables air to mediate the conflict between fire and water, which symbolizes the conflict between *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, mediated by *Tif'eret*.

56. **Dust is cold and dry…** Dust (or earth) symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is associated with the west. West is

characterized as cold and dry because of its proximity to the north (which is cold) and to the south (which is dry). Similarly, according to the theory of the four elements, dust (or earth) is characterized as cold and dry. See above, notes 51–52.

Shekhinah receives the flow of emanation from the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, symbolized respectively by south, north, and east (water, fire, and air). Each of these upper *sefirot* performs through Her.

57. **south is linked with east...** South and east share the characteristic of heat; north and east share wetness. North and west share the characteristic of cold; south and west share dryness. Thus, all the directions (and their corresponding *sefirot*) are interlinked.

See above, note 55. On the various compound directions, see M *Yoma* 5:5, *Zevaḥim* 5:3; *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1; *Zohar* 1:120b; 3:118b, 120a.

58. **north generates gold...** In sefirotic terms, *Gevurah*, symbolized by north and fire, unites with *Shekhinah* (dust) and through Her generates gold, associated with *Gevurah*.

The context in Job 28 is the process of mining metals; the full verse reads: *A place whose stones are sapphire and that has dust of gold*. The golden winged cherubim, covering the ark in the Tabernacle, served as God's terrestrial throne. Here, they are understood as being situated beneath *Shekhinah* and composed of the gold generated through Her.

On dust yielding gold, see *Zohar* 1:249b–250a; 2:236b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 95 (121).

59. **Water is linked with dust...** In sefirotic terms, *Ḥesed*, symbolized by water, unites with *Shekhinah*, symbolized by dust. The coldness of dust together with the wetness of water yields silver, associated with *Ḥesed*. Now *Shekhinah* is linked with both the left and right sides: *Gevurah* (gold) and *Ḥesed* (silver). See above, note 52.

60. **Air grasps water…** Sefirotically, *Tif'eret*, symbolized by air, grasps *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* (water and fire; silver and gold), producing from both of them copper (or bronze).

See *Zohar* 2:138b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 95 (120). The phrase *like the gleam of burnished bronze* derives from Ezekiel's description of the legs of the creatures carrying the sapphire divine throne. The same expression is used by Daniel (10:6) in describing the arms and feet of the celestial being who appeared to him.

61. **dust…when it is by itself…** Sefirotically, *Shekhinah*, on Her own, yields iron. When She is joined with *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (water, fire, and air), each of these produces through Her its characteristic metal: silver, gold, or copper.

The verse reads: *If the iron* [i.e., the ax] *is blunt and one has not whetted the edge, he must exert more strength*.

62. **Without dust, there is no gold…** None of these metals materialize except through the medium of dust (symbolizing *Shekhinah*), because the other three elements (water, fire, and air, symbolizing *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*) interact with one another and unite with dust, thereby engendering the metals below. Subsequently, dust (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) engenders lower forms of matter, corresponding to these metals. See above, p. 84 and n. 50.

"Dross" renders the Zoharic neologism ספסיטא (*saphsita*), (usually spelled סוספיתא [*suspita*]), apparently based on Aramaic כוספא (*kuspa*), "pomace, husk, residue." See *Zohar* 1:30a, 71b, 118b, 179b, 228a; 2:203a, 224b, 236b; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 182; *NO*; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 389, n. 54; idem, *Alchemie und Kabbala*, 40–43; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 336–38.

On silver and lead, see *Zohar* 3:124a (*RM*); *ZḤ* 33d; *TZ* 70, 128b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 96 (122). "Tin" renders קסיטרא (*qasitra*), a variant of קסטירא (*qastira*), from Greek *kassiteros*, "tin." See *Targum Yerushalmi* and *Targum*

Yerushalmi (frag.), Numbers 31:22; *Zohar* 1:125a, 151a; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 186, 188. See below, note 230.

The other form of iron may be steel. The verse in Proverbs reads: *Iron* יחד (*yaḥad*), *sharpens, iron*; but Rabbi Shim'on apparently interprets *yaḥad* according to its homonym: *yaḥad*, "together."

63. **This dust, after giving birth...** Beneath *Shekhinah* (dust), the unified nature of divine being yields multiplicity, as intimated in the verse in Genesis: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*. The *river* is the flow of emanation issuing from *Ḥokhmah* (*Eden*) to water *Shekhinah* (*the garden*).

According to the following verses (2:11–12), various treasures are located specifically in the land of Havilah, which is watered by one of the four rivers, Pishon.

In *Keter Malkhut*, 10, Solomon ibn Gabirol identifies the four elements with the *four riverheads*.

64. **These precious stones... twelve tribes...** In the breastplate of the high priest, twelve precious stones were arranged in four rows; each stone was engraved with a name of one of the twelve tribes, who in the wilderness each camped in one of the four directions. In the *Zohar* these twelve stones also symbolize twelve angels surrounding *Shekhinah* in all four directions. She is arrayed above by angels and below by the twelve tribes.

The image of "twelve oxen beneath the sea" refers to a large bronze reservoir built by Solomon in the Temple, which rested on twelve bronze oxen, three facing outward in each direction. This sea symbolizes *Shekhinah*; the twelve oxen, Her accompanying angels.

On the precious stones, see *Zohar* 1:147b, 149a–b (*ST*), 231b; 2:229b–230a. On *Shekhinah* and the twelve tribes, see above, note 27. On Solomon's sea, see 1 Kings 7:23–26; *Zohar* 1:154a, 241a, 246a; 2:164b. The verse in Exodus concludes: *seal engravings, each with its name for the twelve tribes*.

65. **what sustains the world most is *ruaḥ*...** *Ruaḥ* means "wind, air, spirit." In sefirotic terms, *Tif'eret* (known as *ruaḥ*) harmonizes left and right, and conveys the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah* and the worlds below. "נפש (*Nefesh*), soul, exists only through *ruaḥ*" can be understood in various ways: *Shekhinah* (known as *nefesh*) exists only by the sustenance She receives from *Tif'eret* (*ruaḥ*); or, the human *nefesh* ("soul" or "life") cannot endure without *ruaḥ* ("spirit" or "air").

The word דעת (*da'at*), *knowledge*, in the verse from Proverbs is understood as an allusion to *Tif'eret*, identified with *ruaḥ*; thus *knowledge* is equivalent to *ruaḥ*.

On *ruaḥ* being essential to *nefesh*, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 26, 71–72. On *ruaḥ* being essential to existence, see *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 5; *Midrash Tehillim* 146:3; *Midrash Temurah*, 2 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:109); *Zohar* 1:47a, 148a. On the verse in Proverbs, see *Zohar* 3:49b, 182a.

66. **Those twelve...** The twelve stones and the twelve oxen symbolize the twelve angels accompanying *Shekhinah*—as do the various groups of twelve animals offered by the tribal princes at the dedication of the Tabernacle.

See above, note 64. The full verse in Numbers reads: *All the cattle for the ascent-offering, twelve bulls, twelve rams, twelve yearling lambs and their grain offering, and twelve goats for a purification offering*.

67. **Regarding what Rabbi Ḥizkiyah has said...** Concerning the formation of Adam's body (above, p. 83 and n. 49). Rabbi Shim'on adds that Adam's soul issued from *Shekhinah*, pictured as "the dust of the Temple above." Just as three elements (fire, air, and water) combined with dust to form his body, so three divine elements (*Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, symbolized respectively by water, fire, and air) combined with *Shekhinah* to form his soul, rendering him complete, both physically and spiritually.

The phrase “so too when he was created” can also be rendered “so too when it was created,” referring specifically to Adam’s soul.

68. ***Happy is* האדם (*ha-adam*), *the human…*** Adam—or any human being—is considered blameless only if he is both without deceit and possessing a perfect spirit, composed of all the divine elements.

The full verse reads: *Happy is the human to whom YHVH imputes no iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit*. Rabbi Ḥizkiyah opened his discourse by quoting this verse; now Rabbi Shim’on finally offers its interpretation.

69. **Moses was more complete…** Whereas the patriarchs encountered God only through *Shekhinah* (known as *El Shaddai*), Moses attained the higher rung of *Tif’eret* (known as *YHVH*). His soul was complete, and he encountered *YHVH* directly.

See above at notes 19–22, 27, 31–40. On Moses’ access to the divine realm, see Numbers 12:7: *In all My house he is trusted*.

70. ***Therefore say…*** The full verse reads: *Therefore say to the Children of Israel*: “*I am YHVH. I will take you out from under the burdens of Egypt and I will rescue you from their bondage and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great retributions*.”

71. **However, the essence of all, first…** The finest message a slave could hear: *I will take you out*.

72. **bound with knots of sorcery…** See *Zohar* 2:37b–38a.

On Egyptian expertise in sorcery, see Exodus 7:11; *Bereshit Rabbah* 86:5; BT *Qiddushin* 49b, *Menaḥot* 85b; *Tanḥuma, Va’era* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va’era* 12; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:6–7; *Zohar* 1:83a, 249a; 2:30b; 3:50b.

73. **but not be redeemed…** Completely.

74. **[25b]** The passage from 25a–b is from *Piqqudin* (Commandments), kabbalistic interpretations of the commandments strewn throughout the printed editions of

the *Zohar*. These will be translated separately in a supplementary volume. See Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 215–30.

75. רוח **(*ruaḥ*), *breath*** The word means "wind, breath, spirit."

76. **take a deep breath** לקיטי רוחא (*Leqitei ruḥa*), "gather breath." See Rashi on Exodus 6:9.

77. **Jubilee had not yet released…** *Binah* (the Divine Mother) is known as Jubilee, the source of liberation, including the liberation from Egyptian bondage. She had not yet emanated Her spiritual power to *Shekhinah*, who is "final spirit," consummation of the *sefirot*. Therefore, the latter was not yet empowered to punish the Egyptians and redeem Israel, and She was constricted.

On Jubilee as a name of *Binah*, see above, p. 55, n. 243. The rendering "that Jubilee had not yet released soul" is conjectural and based on the reading in MSS V5 and T1: דעד לא נפיק יובלא נפשו (*de-ad la nefeiq yovela nafshu* [or *nefishu* or *nafsho*]). For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; Soncino; *Sullam*; *MmD*. On the expression עאקו דרוחא (*aqu de-ruḥa*), "anguish [or: constriction] of spirit [or: breath]," see *Targum Onqelos*, Exodus 6:9.

78. **But it is previously written…** Previously, when Moses tried to convince God that he was incapable of conveying the divine message, God replied (Exodus 4:11–12): *Who gives a mouth to a human being? Who makes him mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, YHVH? Now go, and I Myself will be with your mouth and will instruct you what to speak*. It is inconceivable that God would fail to fulfill His promise; so how could Moses still claim to be impaired of speech: *uncircumcised of lips*?

On the question of why Moses repeated his claim, see Ibn Ezra and Naḥmanides on Exodus 6:12.

79. **Moses is voice…** Moses attained the rung of *Tif'eret*, identified with voice. Ideally, the voice of *Tif'eret* is articulated through *Shekhinah*, identified with speech. Now, however, the speech of *Shekhinah* was in exile along with Her people,

Israel; so the voice of Moses lacked speech and he was אטים (*atim*), "obstructed," uncircumcised of lips.

On voice and speech, see *Zohar* 1:36a, 145a–b, 246b; 2:3a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 335, 368–69; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 96.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see BT *Megillah* 29a: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai says, 'Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of the blessed Holy One! Wherever they went in exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them…. When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them…. And even when they are destined to be redeemed, *Shekhinah* will be with them.'"

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14; *Sifrei*, Numbers 84; JT *Ta'anit* 1:1, 64a; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:54; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 73–74 (92–93); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:382–85. On Aaron's role as Moses' prophetic mouthpiece, see Exodus 7:1–2. On *atim*, "obstructed," as meaning "uncircumcised," see Rashi on Exodus 6:12; Deuteronomy 10:16.

80. **until they approached Mount Sinai…** When Israel reached Mount Sinai, voice (*Tif'eret*) reunited with speech, or word (*Shekhinah*). Then *Shekhinah* (known as *Elohim*) conveyed the divine word clearly and forcefully.

81. **Moses complained…** When Moses said *I am uncircumcised of lips*, he was complaining that his voice lacked the divine word (*Shekhinah*), who was in exile. The only time She spoke was when Moses accused Her of not redeeming Israel and She responded.

See above at notes 13–22. The context in Exodus (5:22–23) reads: *Moses returned to YHVH, and said, "Adonai, why have You done evil to this people? Why did You send me? Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people, and You surely have not rescued Your people!"*

82. **The word began to speak…** *Shekhinah* (*Elohim*) began to respond to Moses' accusation, but since Her time of redemption and full expression had not yet arrived, *Tif'eret* (*YHVH*) took up the word and replied to Moses.

See above at notes 17–18. Exodus 6:2 reads: *Elohim spoke to Moses, and He said to him, "I am YHVH."*

83. **Moses was completed and healed…** Now that he was united with *Shekhinah* (the divine word), his speech impediment disappeared. See *Devarim Rabbah* 1:1.

84. **the word did not speak…** *Shekhinah* did not speak until She opened with the revelation at Mount Sinai. The quotation from Exodus 13, which precedes the event at Mount Sinai, seems to contradict this. However, this verse does not actually refer to divine speech, since it does not employ the word דבר (*dibber*), "spoke," but rather אמר (*amar*), which in this context does not mean "said," but rather "said to himself, thought, intended."

On this sense of *amar*, see, e.g., Genesis 20:11; 21:16; 26:9, 28; 31:31; and *Zohar* 1:234b; 2:17a (*MhN*); 3:17b, 161a. Cf. *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 2; *Zohar* 1:16b; 3:88b, 132b–133a (*IR*). The full verse reads: *It happened when Pharaoh sent the people off, that God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although it was close, for God said, "Lest the people regret when they see battle, and go back to Egypt."*

85. ***I rose to open…*** *Shekhinah* (Assembly of Israel), pictured as the divine word, is separated in exile from Her beloved, *Tif'eret*, the voice.

On the verse in Exodus (*Elohim spoke… He said…*), see above at notes 81–82. On the verse in Song of Songs, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah*, ad loc. On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18.

86. **ואל (*ve-el*), *and to, Jacob*…an additional ו (*vav*)…** Rabbi Yehudah is not content with the simple sense of the conjunctive prefix ו (*ve-*), *and*; he insists that here the letter *vav* alludes to the special status of Jacob, who attained the

rung of *Tif'eret*. The numerical value of *vav*—six—signifies *Tif'eret* and the five *sefirot* surrounding Him: *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. Jacob's *sefirah* harmonizes and consummates the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, symbolized respectively by Abraham and Isaac.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 76:1, in the name of Rabbi Re'uven: "The chosen of the patriarchs is Jacob, as is said: *For Yah has chosen Jacob for Himself* (Psalms 135:4)."

See *Zohar* 1:119b, 133a, 144b, 150a, 152a (*ST*), 163b, 171b, 172b, 173b, 180a, 207a; 2:23a, 48b. On Jacob being complete, see *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 8:7, 112c; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 31, 312; *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 25:27; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:5; BT *Pesaḥim* 56a. See above at notes 28–29.

87. **ואלהי (*velohei*), *and God of, Isaac…*** Challenging Rabbi Yehudah's exegesis, Rabbi Yose points out that here the letter *vav* is linked with Isaac, not Jacob.

88. **Jacob was alive…** In the verse cited by Rabbi Yose (addressed to Jacob), Jacob was still alive and had not yet fulfilled his purpose on earth; therefore, the holy *vav*—one of the letters of the name יהוה (*YHVH*)—was not linked with him. Rather, Jacob and the letter *vav* were linked with Isaac.

The expression "the entity reached its place" refers to the situation following Jacob's death, when he had fully attained the rung of *Tif'eret* and the letter *vav* could be linked with him.

Actually, in Genesis 28, Isaac was still alive. The reference here to his being dead may refer to his blindness (since one who is blind is considered dead) or to his virtual death when he was bound on the altar by Abraham. Several sources link his blindness with his being bound.

See *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 7; *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:10; 71:6; 94:5 (and Theodor's note); *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:2; BT *Nedarim* 64b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 32; *Zohar* 1:60a (*Tos*); 3:55b (*Tos*); Vital; and the gloss in the printed editions of the *Zohar*.

89. ***As El Shaddai...*** The full verse reads: *I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El Shaddai, but by My name YHVH I was not known to them*. *El Shaddai* is a name of *Shekhinah*, who is also known as "the speculum that does not shine." *YHVH* refers to *Tif'eret*, the speculum that shines. See above, note 39.

It might seem that the patriarchs encountered and joined with *Shekhinah* on Her own, interrupting Her union with Her divine male partner. However the following verse indicates that *with them* (by means of the patriarchs' devotion), *Yesod* (*My covenant*) was aroused and united with *Shekhinah*. See above, note 30; *OY*.

90. **learn from the blessed Holy One...** That the divine couple must remain united in order to ensure the continued flow of sustenance and vitality.

"To sustain existence" renders לקיימא קיומא (*le-qayyama qiyyuma*), whose range of meaning here embraces "to sustain (or maintain, establish, fulfill, affirm, erect) existence (or sustenance, vitality, pillar, covenant)." See *OY*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 355–83.

91. **whoever merits the covenant...** Whoever maintains ethical and sexual purity inherits *Shekhinah, the land*. See above, p. 78 and n. 30.

92. שדון **(*shaddun*)...** The precise form and sense of the word are uncertain. According to the Masoretic text, the word is spelled שדין (*she-din*), apparently meaning *that there is judgment*.

See *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 29; *Shemot Rabbah* 30:24; Ibn Ezra on the verse; *Zohar* 3:52b.

93. **Who is *the sword*?...** *Shekhinah* is pictured as an avenging sword executing divine *judgment*, poised to attack anyone who betrays the covenant of circumcision through sexual sin. Such immorality ruins the intimate passion of the divine couple; *Yesod* (the divine phallus) no longer receives a flow of emanation from above and has nothing to give *Shekhinah* ("His place").

On *Shekhinah* as "sword," see *Zohar* 1:53b, 66a–b, 237a, 238b, 240b; 2:28b, 54a, 66a; 3:19b, 30b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 69, 213. On betraying the covenant, see above, p. 11 and n. 43.

94. **Who arouses...** Through their virtuous conduct, the righteous stimulate *Yesod* (known as Righteous). The verse in Exodus is read: *I also erected My covenant* (*Yesod* was aroused) *with them* (through the potent virtue of the patriarchs and of all the righteous) *to give them the land of Canaan* (enabling them to inherit *Shekhinah*).

The word מגוריהם (*megureihem*), *their so-journings*, is linked with גורו (*guru*), *fear*, and understood as referring to *Shekhinah*, who instills the fear of God.

See above at note 91. On *Yesod* as Righteous and as *covenant*, see above, note 30.

95. **אשר גרו בה (*Asher garu vah*)...** The full verse reads: *I also erected My covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their sojoumings in which they sojourned*. Here similarly, the phrase אשר גרו בה (*asher garu vah*), *in which they sojourned*, is reinterpreted as "whom they feared," referring to *Shekhinah*, of whom the patriarchs were in awe. (See the preceding note.)

The final sentence may mean: One who has no awe of *Shekhinah* (or the covenant) will never be in awe of God. See Galante.

96. **Of arousal below...** Israel's heartfelt cry from Egyptian bondage aroused God to remember His covenant, thereby stimulating *Yesod* (along with all of the sefirotic limbs) to unite with *Shekhinah*, generating the power of redemption.

The word זכור (*zakhor*), "remember," suggests זכר (*zakhar*), "male," alluding to the male potency of *Yesod*, who is the divine phallus and covenant. See *Zohar* 1:159b, 248a; Volume 3, p. 524, n. 965; above, note 30.

The closing words, *I am YHVH*, may allude to the union of *Shekhinah* (known as *I*) with Her male partner, *YHVH*. The

context (Exodus 6:5–6) reads: *I have also heard the groaning of the Children of Israel, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered My covenant. Therefore say to the Children of Israel: "I am* YHVH*. I will take you out from under the burdens of Egypt and I will rescue you from their bondage and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great retributions."*

97. ***YHVH spoke…*** The verse concludes: *to bring out the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt*.

98. ***Regarding the Children of Israel…*** Moses and Aaron are instructed to be patient with the Israelites and respectful toward the Egyptian king.

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 91; *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 13; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 2; *Shemot Rabbah* 7:3; Rashi on the verse; *Zohar* 1:195b.

99. **Why does Scripture adjoin**… Why does the following verse introduce a genealogy of several of the tribes? Because, Rabbi Yeisa answers, this demonstrates the noble status of the heads of each Israelite clan.

See M *Shabbat* 14:4, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on bar Yoḥai: "All of Israel are children of kings."

100. **Because none of them renounced…** Rabbi Ḥiyya offers a different reason for the joining of these two verses: the genealogy reflects the fact that all the Israelites retained their distinctive identity and behavior, and did not intermingle or intermarry with the Egyptians.

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:5; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:7, 12; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:28; *Leqaḥ Tov* and *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Exodus 6:14; *Zohar* 1:7a.

101. **In order to include Moses and Aaron…** Rabbi Aḥa offers a simpler reason: the genealogy traces the descendants of the first three of Jacob's sons (Reuben, Simeon, and Levi) and concludes by highlighting the two Levites who were sent to Pharaoh: Moses and Aaron. See Rashi on the verse.

Moses and Aaron each utilized a rod (or staff) in bringing several of the ten plagues, as did Moses at the Red Sea. See Exodus 4:2–4, 17, 20; 7:9–12, 15–20; 8:12–13; 9:23; 10:13; 14:16, 21, 26–28.

102. **Now, *these are the heads*?…** The phrase refers to the various heads of Levitical families mentioned in Exodus 6:16–25, but Rabbi Aḥa chooses to read the verse hyperliterally, as if the clause *these are the heads of the fathers of the Levites* referred only to Phinehas, mentioned immediately before. He then explains that the plural *these are the heads* alludes to those who were saved by Phinehas at Shittim, when the tribal chieftain Zimri son of Salu had sexual relations with a Midianite woman and God inflicted a plague upon the people. Out of divine zeal, Phinehas killed the sinning couple, and the plague ceased. Since *the heads of the fathers of the Levites* did not prevent this forbidden sexual act, they would have died too if Phinehas had not saved them. See Numbers 25.

The expression סתים ביה מלה (*setim beih millah*), "for him the word is unspecified [or: concealed]," refers to the ambiguous plural wording "*these are the heads,*" which alludes to Phinehas.

103. **loss of the heads of the Levites…** According to this alternative interpretation, the plural expression *these are the heads of* refers to two prominent Levitical priests and sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, who were later killed by divine fire because *they brought forward alien fire before YHVH* (Leviticus 10:1–2). According to Rabbi Aḥa, their improper cultic act "diminished" or ruined the union of the divine couple, separating *Yesod* ("sign of the covenant") from *Shekhinah* ("its place"). Their wandering souls, however, were reincarnated (or impregnated) in their nephew Phinehas, fueling his zeal at Shittim; so their loss was recovered in him. He reunited the divine couple and inherited the priesthood of Aaron's two sons.

According to a midrashic interpretation, one of the causes of the death of Nadab and Abihu was the fact that they had fathered no children. Elsewhere (3:217a) the *Zohar* connects this view with rabbinic statement that "whoever does not engage in procreation… is as though he diminishes the [divine] image [in which the human being was created]." Rabbi Aḥa probably alludes to this by saying that Nadab and Abihu "diminished."

On the sefirotic consequences of Nadab and Abihu's action, see *Zohar* 3:37b. On their childlessness, see Numbers 3:4; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 26:9. On diminishing (or nullifying) the image, see *Tosefta Yevamot* 8:7; *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:2; 34:14; BT *Yevamot* 63b; *Zohar* 1:13a, 186b; 3:7a; *ZḤ* 59a (*MhN*), 89b (*MhN, Rut*); Vol. 3, p. 137, n. 329.

On childlessness and reincarnation, see Vol. 3, p. 137, n. 331. On the reincarnation of Nadab and Abihu's souls in Phinehas, see *Zohar* 3:57a–b, 61b, 213a–b, 217a. On this particular type of (usually temporary) reincarnation, known as עבור (*ibbur*), "impregnation," see Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 348–49. On Phinehas inheriting the priesthood, see Numbers 25:13; BT *Zevaḥim* 101b; *Zohar* 3:214a.

"Potfuls" renders טסטוקא (*tastoqa*), apparently based on טשטקא (*tashteqa*), "a type of pot"—referring here to the spiritual contents of Nadab and Abihu, their souls. See BT *Niddah* 68a; *Arukh* and *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *tashtaq*. Cf. טסקא (*tasqa*), "basket, measure." For other explanations of the term, see *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 180 (quoting *Targum Yonatan*, Ezekiel 43:10); Galante; *DE*; *MM*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *tastoqa*; *MmD*; Scholem. Cf. *Zohar* 2:234b (and Scholem, ad loc.).

104. **Why is Phinehas mentioned here?…** The context concerns Moses and Aaron, whereas Phinehas (Aaron's grandson) was born much later. Rabbi Aḥa explains that God nearly excluded Aaron from the covenantal mission to Pharaoh, because He foresaw that

Aaron's two sons would one day damage the covenant by ruining the union of the divine couple (see the preceding note). However, when God foresaw the bold restorative action of Phinehas, he realized that Aaron's virtuous nature would be vindicated.

Exodus 6:5 reads in full: *I have also heard the groaning of the Children of Israel, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered My covenant*. Exodus 6:26 (at the conclusion of the genealogy) reads in full: *It is the same Aaron and Moses to whom YHVH said, "Bring out the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt by their forces."* On the phrase "rectifying their crookedness," see Ecclesiastes 1:15; *Zohar* 3:57b, 61b.

105. **the verse should read *They are the same…*** Why the singular form: *It is the same Aaron and Moses?* To indicate the blending of the two brothers' respective divine qualities: air and water, symbolizing *Tif'eret* (Moses' *sefirah*) and *Ḥesed* (Aaron's *sefirah*). The following verse reverses their order, underscoring their singular unity: *it is the same Moses and Aaron*.

The two verses (Exodus 6:26–27) read: *It is the same Aaron and Moses to whom YHVH said, "Bring out the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt by their forces." They were the ones speaking to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the Children of Israel from Egypt—it is the same Moses and Aaron*.

106. **having risen in their inn to engage in Torah** On the midnight ritual of engaging in Torah, see BT *Berakhot* 3b: "Rabbi Shim'on the Ḥasid said, 'There was a harp suspended above [King] David's bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn.'" See Psalms 119:62.

In the *Zohar* this legendary custom is expanded into a ritual. At midnight, God delights in the souls of the righteous in the Garden of Eden, and those who study

Torah here below partake of the celestial joy. Kabbalists are expected to rise at midnight and adorn *Shekhinah* with words of Torah in preparation for Her union with *Tif'eret*. This parallels the midnight vigil common among Christian monks from early medieval times. In *Zohar* 3:119a, Rabbi Yehudah alludes to the Christian practice: "I have seen something similar among the nations of the world."

See JT *Berakhot* 1:1, 2d; *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 3:3, 111b; *Aggadat Bereshit* 23:5; BT *Sanhedrin* 102a; 2 Enoch 8:3; *Seder Gan Eden* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:138); *Zohar* 1:10b, 72a, 77a–b, 82b, 92a–b, 136b, 178a, 206b–207b, 231b, 242b; 2:36b, 46a, 130a–b, 136a, 173b, 195b–196a; 3:13a, 21b–22b, 52b, 67b–68a, 193a; *ZḤ* 13b–c (*MhN*); Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 146–50; Hellner-Eshed, *Ve-Nahar Yotse me-Eden*, 149–76. Cf. Matthew 25:6.

107. **This verse should read...** Rabbi El'azar suggests a more logical wording: *Know today that YHVH is Elohim and take it to heart*, i.e., first one should become aware that *YHVH* is *Elohim*, and then ponder it. However, if one delves deeply into Torah, the reason for this (or any) precise biblical wording becomes joyously clear.

The full verse reads: *Know today and take to your heart that YHVH is Elohim in the heavens above and on the earth below, there is none else*.

108. **לבבך (*levavekha*)...לבך (*libbekha*)...** In order to explain the wording that he has just questioned, Rabbi El'azar questions another word in the same verse. The normal spelling of the word for "heart" is לב (*lev*), with one ב (*vet*); why is the word spelled here with a double vet: לבבך (*levavekha*)? Because, he continues, the double vet signifies the two impulses within the human heart. See M *Berakhot* 9:5: "*With all* לבבך (*levavekha*), *your heart* (Deuteronomy 6:5) —with both your impulses: your good impulse and your evil impulse." Ideally, one should serve God not only with the good impulse but even with the evil impulse—by sublimating and channeling one's passions into virtuous

action, thereby contributing the raw power of the evil impulse to the good.

The pair of impulses within the human heart correspond to (and derive from) the polar opposites *Ḥesed* (Love) on the right and *Din* (Judgment, or Justice) on the left, which in turn correspond to the divine names יהוה (*YHVH*) and אלהים (*Elohim*). Thus, by contemplating the interplay and ideal unity of the impulses in one's own heart (*take to levavekha, your heart*), a person can *know… that YHVH is Elohim*—that divine Love (or Compassion) and Justice are inseparable. This explains why the verse reads *Know today and take to your heart that YHVH is Elohim*.

See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 101. On the two impulses, see also BT *Berakhot* 61a; *Zohar* 1:49b, 144b, 155b, 165b, 174b, 178b; 3:263b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 42–43. On *YHVH* as Compassion and *Elohim* as Justice, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; *Zohar* 1:4a, 12a, 20a, 48b, 91a; 2:161a, 229a; 3:138b (*IR*); *ZḤ* 70d (*ShS*).

109. **The wicked cause a defect above…** By surrendering to their evil impulse, rather than mastering, sublimating, and integrating it into the good, the wicked ruin the harmony above between left and right, *Din* and *Ḥesed*. Consequently, *Din* can punish the world harshly, its judgment unmitigated by love.

On causing a defect above, see BT *Sanhedrin* 74a (in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai); *Zohar* 3:16b, 66a, 79a, 297a–b. On the concept of weakening and strengthening God, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 319; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:12; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:33; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 25:1; *Zohar* 1:57b, 234b; 2:32b, 64a, 65b.

110. **only to themselves…** The verse in Deuteronomy 32 is notoriously difficult. Rabbi El'azar suggests reading it as follows: *Ruined Him—no; His children, their defect*. This means: They have and have not caused a defect above. They have not caused an essential defect but rather a defect

pertaining only to them. As a result of human sin, *Tif'eret* (symbolized by *the heavens*) is prevented from conveying the flow of emanation to the worlds below (via *Shekhinah*). The divine realm has enough for itself, but humanity suffers.

111. **Further, לו (*lo*), *Him*...** The verse reads: *Ruined* לו (*lo*), *Him*—לא (*lo*), *no*. Focusing on the two spellings of the homonyms לו (*lo*), *Him*, and לא (*lo*), *no*, Rabbi El'azar describes the defect caused above by evil. לו (*Lo*), *Him*, indicates that the wicked ruin the harmony above in God (*Him*). The resulting imbalance between left and right impedes the flow of blessing; so לא (*lo*), *no*—no blessing is conveyed below.

112. **Judah comes from the left...** Judah, progenitor of the Davidic dynasty, symbolizes *Shekhinah*, or *Malkhut* (Kingdom). *Malkhut* derives from *Gevurah* on the left side, and Judah shares this origin. By clinging to the powerful divine right arm, Judah (through his Davidic descendants) vanquished other nations.

See *Zohar* 1:154b, 156a, 243a; 2:223a.

113. **Why to the right...** The left symbolizes *Din* (Judgment)—or *Gevurah* (Power)—so why couldn't Judah vanquish nations by this potency alone? Rabbi El'azar explains that the right implies greater power than the left—despite the usual association of left with *Gevurah* (Power). Thus, when God judges or punishes Israel, He does so only with the lesser power of the left and subsequently draws them near again with His powerful right. Conversely, with other nations, God thrusts them away with the right and draws them near with the left. Judah too conquered other nations with the power of the right.

The term "convert of righteousness" refers to a convert who accepts all the laws of Judaism. Here, it implies that such a person is "drawn near with the left"—drawn by and to (and only as far as) *Shekhinah*, known as "righteousness," on the left. See Judah Halevi, *Kuzari* 1:27; *Zohar* 1:13a–b, 96a; 2:70a, 87a; 3:14a–b, 168a.

Traditionally a potential convert is thrust away with the left and drawn near with the right; that is, he is not immediately accepted with open arms but is first repulsed by being warned of the difficulties of Judaism, to make sure of the sincerity of his convictions. Here, the *Zohar* reverses left and right, in accordance with the equivalence of *Shekhinah* and left, as mentioned in the preceding paragraph of this note. See *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Yitro*) 1; *Rut Rabbah* 2:16. Cf. BT *Yevamot* 47a–b.

114. **his journeying was on the right** According to the simple sense of Numbers 10:11–28, the tribes journeyed through the wilderness in a single column (see Milgrom, *Numbers*, 76). However, according to one rabbinic view, the tribes marched in the same square arrangement in which they camped (see Numbers 2:1–31): Judah (accompanied by Issachar and Zebulun) on the east, Reuben (accompanied by Simeon and Gad) on the south, the Levites carrying the ark in the middle, Ephraim (accompanied by Manasseh and Benjamin) on the west, and Dan (accompanied by Asher and Naphtali) on the north.

Here, Rabbi El'azar adopts this view. Judah, who derives from the left, clung to the right (see above, note 112), and journeyed on the east. (In the *Zohar* right is usually associated with south and *Ḥesed*, but here it is also apparently associated with east and *Tif'eret*—who is known as *Raḥamim* [Compassion], which tends toward *Ḥesed* [Love].)

See *Baraita di-Mlekhet ha-Mishkan* 13; JT *Eruvin* 5:1, 22c; Rashi on Numbers 2:17; 10:25; *Zohar* 1:243a; 2:223a. On Judah and the south, see *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bemidbar* 14; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:6; Galante.

115. **Those accompanying him...** The tribes of Issachar and Zebulun accompanied Judah on the right (eastern) side. See the preceding note. According to rabbinic tradition, the tribes of Issachar and Zebulun made a pact: Zebulun would sail the seas, engaging in commerce, and thereby support Issachar, who devoted himself to

studying Torah. Here, Torah is linked with the right, based on the verse in Deuteronomy. Zebulun, who supports Issachar's study of Torah, is associated with *Netsaḥ*, the right thigh supporting the divine body.

Judah, who derives from the left side (identified with north), joined with the right (symbolized by water).

On Issachar and Zebulun, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 72:5; 97 (p. 1220); 98:12; 99:9; *Tanḥuma, Vayḥi* 11; *Zohar* 1:155a, 241b. On Issachar's wisdom and study of Torah, see also 1 Chronicles 12:33; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 354; *Bereshit Rabbah* 72:5. In *Zohar* 2:104b, Zebulun is associated not with the right but with the left thigh, *Hod*.

On the verse in Deuteronomy, see *Zohar* 1:219b. According to the verse in Leviticus, the right thigh of the well-being offering is given to the officiating priest.

116. **Reuben, who sinned...** As Jacob's firstborn, Reuben began on the right side, but he veered to the left when he sinned by sleeping with Bilhah, his father's concubine.

According to 1 Chronicles 5:1, by this impulsive act Reuben forfeited the birthright: *The sons of Reuben, firstborn of Israel—he was the firstborn; but when he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph*.

See Genesis 35:22; 49:4; *Zohar* 1:176a–b, 235b, 243a, 244b; 2:223a.

117. **those accompanying him...** The tribes of Simeon and Gad accompanied Reuben in the march through the wilderness, on the southern side. See above, note 114.

Simeon is associated with the zodiacal sign of Taurus, the ox (or bull). In Ezekiel's vision the creatures carrying the heavenly throne had four faces: a human face at the front, the face of a lion on the right, the face of an ox on the left, and the face of an eagle at the back. Based on this vision, in Kabbalah the ox symbolizes the left side. Gad is associated here with the left thigh, *Hod*, above the left heel.

Thus Reuben, who began on the right (identified with the south), clung to the left (symbolized by fire).

On Simeon and Taurus, see *Midrash Tehillim* 90:3 (and Buber's note 16); *Zohar* 1:173a, 200b, 236a. Cf. *Massekhet Soferim*, add. 1, 1:3; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Exodus 418. On Simeon and the left, see *Zohar* 2:104a. In *Zohar* 2:104b, Gad is associated not with the left but with the right thigh, *Netsaḥ*.

118. **Therefore, what we have said...** The various combinations of right and left represented by the tribes correspond to the integration of the good and evil impulses in the heart, as well as to the unity of *YHVH* and *Elohim*. See above, note 108.

119. ***It is the same...*** Similarly, the singular form *It is the same Aaron and Moses... It is the same Moses and Aaron* indicates the integration of their corresponding *sefirot: Tif'eret* (symbolized by air and Moses) and *Ḥesed* (symbolized by water and Aaron). See above, note 105.

120. **holy unification is intimated...** According to Rabbi Abba, this famous verse hints that by unifying one's heart and focusing totally on the love of God, one can unify the *sefirot*, the various aspects of the divine name. As indicated above, *with all* לבבך (*levavekha*), *your heart*, alludes to the good and evil impulses, corresponding to the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. (See above, note 108.) These two *sefirot* are pictured respectively as the right and left divine arms, which embrace *Shekhinah*, who is known as "soul of David" and alluded to by the phrase *with all your soul*.

The final phrase of the verse is *and with all* מאדך (*me'odekha*), *your might* [literally: *your muchness*]. Here, it apparently alludes to the boundless dimension of *Ein Sof*, the ultimate goal of contemplative love, enveloping all the *sefirot*. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 43; *Nefesh David*.

On the phrase "soul of David," see 1 Samuel 18:1; 2 Samuel 5:8; *Zohar* 1:101a, 206a, 240a; 2:171a; 3:45b, 182a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 348; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 43; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 61 (75).

121. ***And with all your might*—Jacob...** Alternatively, this phrase alludes to Jacob, symbolizing *Tif'eret*, who embraces right and left and spans the full sefirotic spectrum.

On Jacob as *me'od* (*might, muchness*), see *Zohar* 1:181b. Cf. *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 14. On the span of *Tif'eret*, see *Zohar* 1:1b, 148b (*ST*). On *It is the same Aaron and Moses...*, see above, note 119.

122. **[*serpent*]** תנין (*Tannin*), whose biblical range of meaning includes "serpent, crocodile, dragon, sea serpent, sea monster." The serpent figures prominently in the following discussion.

123. **Of the night...** See BT *Berakhot* 3b: "Rabbi Shim'on the Ḥasid said, 'There was a harp suspended above [King] David's bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn.'"

In the *Zohar* this legendary custom is expanded into a ritual. At midnight, God delights in the souls of the righteous in the Garden of Eden, and those who study Torah here below partake of the celestial joy. Kabbalists are expected to rise at midnight and adorn *Shekhinah* with words of Torah in preparation for Her union with *Tif'eret*. See *Zohar* 1:82b, 206b–207b; above, note 106.

124. **Whoever strives...** Because of David's devotion to determining the law precisely and judging fairly, he was

considered as if he had contemplated Torah the whole day and fulfilled it entirely.

See BT *Shabbat* 10a; Rashi on Exodus 18:13.

125. **Why? All day…** During the day (associated with the right), David engaged in justice and judgment (associated with the left) in order to join left with right. By night (symbolizing *Shekhinah*), he adorned Her in song in preparation for Her union with *Tif'eret* (symbolized by day). See *Zohar* 2:144b-145a.

126. **he brought all those beasts…** David drew the angelic forces to *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as both field and sea.

The expression "beasts of the field" derives from Psalms 104:11: *They water all beasts of the field; wild asses quench their thirst*.

127. **Solomon appeared**… In the days of Solomon, the sea of *Shekhinah* became full and watered the angelic forces beneath Her—providing first for the highest angels, identified here as תנינייא (*tanninayya*), "sea serpents."

According to the Midrash, just as the moon does not become full until the fifteenth day of its cycle, so it remained incomplete until the glorious reign of Solomon in the fifteenth generation from Abraham. See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:12, and *Shemot Rabbah* 15:26: "When Solomon appeared, the disk of the moon became full." See above, p. 47 and n. 204.

The context in Genesis (1:21–22) reads: *God created the great* תנינם (*tanninim*), *sea serpents, and every living creature that crawls, which the water swarmed, of each kind, and every winged bird of each kind, and God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds multiply on earth!"* On the word תנין (*tannin*), see above, note 122.

128. **On the supernal right side…** Rabbi El'azar offers a cryptic, veiled description of the origin of evil,

whose ultimate source is the holy right side. Apparently, the thirteen springs issue from the highest realms of divinity and generate a thousand streams—and thirteen other streams, which gather water from nine hundred and ninety-nine of the thousand. The two remaining halves of the thousandth stream rejoin, and the resulting single stream enters the thirteen "other" streams, becoming a demonic serpent.

For various correlations of other specific images with particular *sefirot*, see *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*. On the thirteen springs (or rivers), see *Zohar* 3:131a–b, 139a, 140a (all *IR*) 289a–b (*IZ*). According to rabbinic sources, thirteen rivers of balsam await the righteous in the world that is coming. See JT *Avodah Zarah* 3:1, 42c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 62:2; BT *Ta'anit* 25a; *Zohar* 2:146b. For other interpretations of the thirteen springs, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*.

On the demonic sea serpent, see *Zohar* 1:52a; 2:28a, 34a–35b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:465–67. See Exodus 7:9–13, and above at note 122. "His fins" renders גדפוי (*gadpoi*), literally "his wings."

129. **When he raises his tail…** The sea serpent dominates all other forces in the streams.

See *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:38); *Zohar* 2:34b; cf. 3:119b.

130. **streak of fire… scales…** "Streak" renders פסותא (*pasuta*), apparently deriving from פס (*pas*), "strip." For another interpretation, see *DE*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *pasuta*. Cf. *Zohar* 3:67b.

"Scales" renders קליפין (*qelippin*), "shells, husks, scales." Here the term apparently refers to the scales of the sea serpent, representing its demonic powers.

For the meaning "scales," see *Targum Onqelos*, Leviticus 11:9; BT *Sanhedrin* 95b; *Midrash Tehillim* 91:3; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:3; Radak on 1 Samuel 17:5; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 11:9; *Zohar* 1:50a; *OY*. In the *Zohar*, *qelippin*, "shells," surrounding the kernel of the nut

symbolize demonic forces outside the divine realm. See *Zohar* 1:19b–20a, 44b (*Heikh*); 2:15b (*MhN*), 140b, 233b; Vol. 1, p. 151, n. 341.

131. **color of blue-black…** A color that characterizes *Shekhinah*, who conveys the power of judgment to the demonic forces so that they can lash the wicked.

See *Zohar* 1:51a. On the relation between *Shekhinah* and the demonic realm, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:376–79; Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 189–92; Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess*, 249, 251–54.

"Waves" renders גלגלין (*galgellin*), literally "wheels," but in medieval Spanish Hebrew poetry and the *Zohar* גלגל (*galgal*), "wheel," is equivalent to גל (*gal*), "wave." See *Zohar* 1:245a; 2:48b–49a, 50b, 56a; *OY*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 296.

132. **until finally, in the north…** A flame issues from *Din* (Judgment), symbolized by the north, and a herald orders the demonic powers to scatter and proclaims the serpent's subjugation.

See *Zohar* 2:34b. "Hags" renders סבתין (*savtin*), "old women," referring here to witchlike demons, perhaps Lilith and her cohorts. Cf. below, p. 156, n. 61.

"Muzzle" renders קלידא (*qelida*), which derives from Greek *kleido*, "to lock up." See BT *Shabbat* 89b, *Sanhedrin* 113a; Scholem.

The context in Ezekiel (29:3–4) reads: *Thus says Adonai YHVH: I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great sea serpent sprawling amidst his streams, who said, "My Nile is mine; I made it for myself." I will put hooks in your jaws and make the fish of your streams cling to your scales. I will haul you up from your streams, with all the fish of your streams clinging to your scales*. On Pharaoh and the serpent, see Exodus 7:9–13 and above at note 122; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 3; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:4; *Zohar* 1:34a.

133. **Once every seventy years…** The demonic monster is subdued periodically so that he will not threaten the divine realm and the cosmic order.

See *Zohar* 1:34b. In quoting Psalm 95, Rabbi El'azar is apparently playing with נברכה (*nivrekha*), *let us bend the knee*, and a different (perhaps related) verb: נברכה (*nevarekha*), "let us bless."

134. **Supernal sea serpents…** Angelic powers, as opposed to the demonic sea serpent. They rule over all the demonic powers—or, over all the other powers within the sea of *Shekhinah*.

See above at note 127. The context in Genesis (1:21–22) reads: *God created the great sea serpents, and every living creature that crawls, which the water swarmed, of each kind, and every winged bird of each kind, and God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds multiply on earth!"*

135. **[28a]** The passage marked *Tosefta* (from the middle of 27b through the top of 28a) does not match the style of the *Tosefta* of the *Zohar*. Scholem concludes that it derives from the circle of the *Ra'aya Meheimna*. I have not translated it here.

136. ***Say to Aaron…*** The full verse reads: *When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, "Perform a wonder," then say to Aaron, "Take your staff and fling it down before Pharaoh—it will become a serpent*." On the word תנין (*tannin*), *serpent*, see above, note 122.

137. **Moses' [staff] was holier…** With this staff Moses performed miracles before Pharaoh, split the Red Sea, and struck the rock to produce water. According to M *Avot* 5:6, it was one of the ten things created in the last moments of the week of Creation, on Sabbath eve at twilight.

On the staff being engraved with the divine name, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 2:21; 4:20; 14:21; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:8; 11:10; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 87; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, add. 2, 4; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Midrash Tehillim* 114:9; *Sefer ha-Yashar, Shemot*, 307; *Zohar* 1:6b, 9a; 2:48a, 60b, 64a; *ZḤ* 30b

(*MhN*). (According to the midrashim listed here, the staff was engraved with the name *YHVH*.) Cf. Ibn Ezra (short), Exodus 3:13. On the staffs of the sorcerers, see below and Exodus 7:11–12.

138. **to subdue all those…** Since Aaron derived from *Ḥesed* on the right, his staff was suited to subdue the demonic powers linked with Egypt and deriving from the left.

139. **punishment begins there…** Pharaoh's power derived from the demonic serpent, so his punishment commenced there and was signaled by Aaron's staff turning into a serpent. Seeing this, the Egyptian sorcerers thought that they would triumph in their realm of expertise; but Aaron's serpent reverted to dry wood and swallowed their staffs, demonstrating "that a superior power existed on earth," who could overwhelm their sorcery even through something "beneath them," such as a wooden staff.

On the Egyptians' reaction to Aaron's sign, see *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 12; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:6. The full verse reads: *Each flung down his staff and they became serpents, and Aaron's staff swallowed their staffs*.

140. **two signs…** Above, a supernal, holy serpent dominated the demonic powers. Below, Aaron's wooden staff swallowed their serpentine staffs.

On the supernal serpent, cf. above at notes 127, 134. On Pharaoh's expertise in sorcery, see *Zohar* 1:195a; 2:37b, 52b.

141. **illusion…** דויזו דעינא (*Ḥeizu de-eina*), "vision of the eye," playing on אחיזת עיניים (*aḥizat einayim*), "seizing the eyes, deception, illusion."

Rabbi Abba rejects the interpretation presented in *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 7:11; *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 7:10–11; Ibn Ezra (short and long) on Exodus 7:11. Cf. M *Sanhedrin* 7:11.

142. **their own serpents…** It is not so unusual for a snake to swallow a snake, whereas here the miracle was compounded: both Aaron's serpent and the sorcerers' serpents were turned back into wood and then Aaron's staff swallowed theirs. Rabbi Yose reads Exodus 7:12 literally: *Aaron's staff swallowed their staffs*.

See *Targum Yerushalmi* on the verse; *Sefer ha-Yashar, Va'era*, 310–11; *Leqaḥ Tov* and *Sekhel Tov* on the verse. Cf. *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 3; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:7; Rashi and Ibn Ezra (long) on the verse.

143. ***I am against you…*** The power of the Egyptians originates in the demonic serpent, but their wisdom of sorcery derives directly from the lowest demonic rung.

The context in Ezekiel (29:3–4) reads: *Thus says Adonai YHVH: I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great sea serpent sprawling amidst his streams, who said, "My Nile is mine; I made it for myself" I will put hooks in your jaws and make the fish of your streams cling to your scales. I will haul you up from your streams, with all the fish of your streams clinging to your scales*. On Pharaoh and the serpent, see the sources cited above at the end of note 132.

144. **Their wisdom…** The Egyptians obtain their wisdom by subjugating the lower demonic rungs to the higher demonic powers, which emanate from the serpent.

"Their highest rung" apparently refers to the heavenly prince of Egypt. The phrase *behind the millstones* derives from Exodus 11:5, describing the victims of the last of the ten plagues (the killing of the firstborn): *Every firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones, and every firstborn of the beasts*. In the *Zohar* this phrase refers to the demonic realm, the source of magic and sorcery. See 1:48a, 118a, 177a, 223b; 2:37b, 56b, 80a, 191b.

145. **gateway of the gate…** בבא דתרעא (*Bava de-tar'a*), a redundancy found only in the *Zohar*, perhaps signaling a

deep inner meaning about to unfold.

See *Zohar* 1:201b; 3:15a; *ZḤ* 12b (*MhN*).

146. **passerine…** A conjectural translation of קטפירא (*qatpira*), a Zoharic neologism with a wide range of meaning. “Passerine” refers to the largest order of birds.

See *Zohar* 1:33a, 64a, 72a, 243a; *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 188; *OY*; *MM*; *NO*; *DE*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *qatpora*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 352.

147. **He turned…** Rabbi El’azar turned his head.

On God accomplishing His mission through everything, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 22:3; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 5:8; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 49; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 18:22; *Shemot Rabbah* 10:1; *Zohar* 3:36b, 107a.

148. **Who will testify…** This interpretation of the verse from Habakkuk appears in BT *Ta’anit* 11a.

149. **two missions…** Aaron’s staff miraculously swallowed the staffs of the sorcerers; furthermore, it turned temporarily into a serpent.

150. **May the breath expire…** A curse appearing often in rabbinic literature, equivalent to “May they drop dead!”

For other examples in the *Zohar*, see 1:238b; 3:105a, 149b, 152a.

151. **In Aaron’s hand…** If God could transform an inanimate object such as Aaron’s wooden staff into a living creature, then of course He can resurrect a virtuous creature who has died.

Cf. BT *Sanhedrin* 91a. “He joyously renews” renders יחדי (*yeḥaddei*), “he will gladden, make joyous,” which here may involve a play on יחדת (*yeḥaddat*), “he will renew.” See *Zohar* 1:119a, 203a; 2:57b, 234a, 259a (*Heikh*); 3:68b; Galante; *Nefesh David*; Soncino; *Sullam*; *MmD*; Edri.

152. **that very body…** God will not create new bodies, but rather revive and restore the person’s original body.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 95:1; BT *Pesaḥim* 68a, *Sanhedrin* 91b; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:4; *Tanḥuma, Vayiggash* 8; *Zohar* 1:115a (*MhN*), 126a (*MhN*), 130b, 181b; 2:100a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 87–89.

153. **one bone remains…** According to Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Hananya, God will resurrect humans from the vertebra at the base of the spinal column, which does not decompose in the grave. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 28:3; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 12:5.

Here Rabbi Ḥiyya combines this motif with the tradition in *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34: "Rabbi Shim'on says, 'All bodies crumble into the dust of the earth until nothing remains except a spoonful of decayed matter. This mingles with the dust like leaven mixed with dough. In the time to come… it resurrects the entire body.'"

See *Zohar* 1:69a, 126a (*MhN*), 137a (*MhN*); 3:169b, 222a, 270b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 271; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 87–89.

"Its smooth members" renders שייפוי (*shaifoi*). Deriving from a root meaning "to smooth, rub, slip," שייפא (*shaifa*) signifies "limb" in the *Zohar*, perhaps based on the Talmudic expression (BT *Sotah* 7b) על איבריה לשפא (*al eivreih le-shafa*), "each limb entered its socket"—"slipping" into place—or "… entered the casket."

See *Arukh*, s.v. *shaf*; Rashi, ad loc., and on Job 33:21, citing *Ḥullin* 42b; *Zohar* 3:170a; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 227.

154. **By dew…** The full verse reads: *Your dead will live, my corpses will arise. Awake and shout for joy, O dwellers in the dust! For Your dew is a dew of lights, and the earth will give birth to spirits of the dead*.

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34: "Rabbi Yehudah said, '… In the time to come, the blessed Holy One will bring down a dew of revival, reviving the dead…. *For Your dew is a dew of lights*….' Rabbi Tanhum said, '… From where does it descend? From the head of the blessed Holy One. In the time to come, He will shake the hair of His head and bring

down a dew of revival, reviving the dead, as is said: *I was asleep, but my heart was awake…. For my head is drenched with dew* (Song of Songs 5:2).'"

See JT *Berakhot* 5:2, 9b; BT *Shabbat* 88b; *Zohar* 1:118a (*MhN*), 130b–131a, 225b, 232a; 3:128b (*IR*), 135b (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 88–89.

155. ***Take your staff…*** The verse begins: *YHVH said to Moses, "Say to Aaron…"*

156. ***The Egyptians could not drink…*** Which proves that the Nile filled all the other sources of water throughout Egypt. By stretching his staff over the Nile, Aaron brought blood to all the waters of Egypt.

157. **Lower waters diverge…** *Shekhinah* distributes the flow of emanation to the angelic powers and the worlds beneath Her, after receiving from *Yesod*, who is known as *one place* and *gathering of waters. Yesod* initially receives from *Tif'eret* (known as *heaven*), beneath whom He is situated.

See *Zohar* 1:12a, 18a, 33a.

158. **That expanse…***Yesod* is רקיעא (*reqi'a*) "expanse, firmament," which links *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* (symbolized respectively by sun and moon). He conveys the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah*, known as "earth" and "lower world."

See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, in the name of Resh Lakish: "There are seven [heavens]…. In the one called רקיע (*raqi'a*), sun, moon, stars, and constellations are set." See *Zohar* 1:8b, 17a–b, 34a, 162b; 2:2a, 246a.

159. **When Judgment looms…** Ideally, *Shekhinah* suckles from *Yesod*, but when harsh Judgment prevails as a result of human evil, She suckles directly from the left side—without the mitigating influence of the right—and executes divine Judgment. The sea of *Shekhinah* then displays two aspects: benevolent white and menacing red. In Egypt, this red appeared as blood in the Nile.

"Those who suckle from Her" are the heavenly princes of the nations. "Strikes above and… below" refers to *Shekhinah*'s punishment of the demonic power (or heavenly

prince) of Egypt above and the Egyptians and the Nile below. See below, note 163.

On Israel drinking water and the Egyptians drinking blood, see *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 14, *Bo* 3; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 8; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 19; *Midrash Tehillim* 78:10; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:10.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *YHVH has a sword, full of blood, gorged with fat—with the blood of lambs and goats, with the kidney fat of rams. For YHVH has a slaughter in Bozrah, a great butchery in the land of Edom*. On *Shekhinah* as "sword," see above, note 93.

160. **Israel sold them water...** Only in this way could the Egyptians obtain water, thereby enriching the Israelites.

See *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 14, *Bo* 3; *Midrash Tehillim* 78:10; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:10.

161. **Corresponding to his rung...** David, the ideal king, is associated with *Shekhinah*, or *Malkhut* (Kingdom). In this psalm he addresses Her as *my God the King*, seeking to *exalt* Her—to both praise and raise *Shekhinah*—conducting Her toward Her divine partner, who would protect Her.

Shekhinah is also known as "throne," "lower light," and "moon." David arrayed Her for union; consequently, his son Solomon found Her complete, ready to join *Tif'eret*.

According to the Midrash, just as the moon does not become full until the fifteenth day of its cycle, so it remained incomplete until the glorious reign of Solomon in the fifteenth generation from Abraham. See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:12, and *Shemot Rabbah* 15:26: "When Solomon appeared, the disk of the moon became full."

See above at notes 126–27; p. 47 and n. 204; *Zohar* 2:144b–145a.

162. **the left arouses...** The *sefirah* of *Din* (Judgment) arouses, filling *Shekhinah*, without the mitigating influence of *Ḥesed* on the right. Then blood flows through various streams beneath Her and reaches the enemies on earth.

163. **their dominion prevailed…** God first punished the heavenly prince of Egypt, who derived from the left side; thereby the Nile (deified by the Egyptians) became vulnerable to attack, along with all the Egyptian idols, made of wood and stone.

The full verse reads: *YHVH said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their channels, and over their ponds, and over all the gatherings of their waters, that they become blood. There will be blood in all the land of Egypt,* ובעצים ובאבנים (*u-va-etsim u-va-avanim*), *and in the trees and in the stones*.'" The final phrase is ambiguous and could mean *and in the wooden and stone* [*vessels*]. Here, Rabbi Yitsḥak interprets it as *and in the wooden and stone* [*idols*]. See *Shemot Rabbah* 9:11; *Zohar* 2:18b (*MhN*).

On the deification of the Nile, see *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 14, *Shemot Rabbah* 9:9; *Zohar* 2:18a–b (*MhN*). On striking the heavenly prince first, see Isaiah 24:21; *Mekhilta, Shirta* 2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:14; *Tanḥuma, Bo* 4, *Beshallaḥ* 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bo* 6, 19; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:9; 21:5; 23:15; *Zohar* 2:54b; above, pp. 19, 21, and nn. 71, 80.

164. **Rabbi Zuta…** The name means "young, small, junior."

165. **What prompted Solomon…** How could the wise Solomon encourage a person to indulge in mere physical pleasure? Rabbi Ḥiyya explains that if one acts virtuously, God grants him tranquility, enabling him to enjoy his food and drink.

166. **where is the wisdom here?** This is too obvious to be profound.

167. **cook your dish…** When you mature and ripen, you will perceive the deeper meaning.

On this metaphor, see *Zohar* 2:149a, 217b. Cf. *Zohar* 1:255b (*Hash*); the parable in 2:176a–b; Vol.1, p. xxv.

168. **crown Assembly of Israel…** Through righteous action, the human being crowns *Shekhinah*, known as Assembly of Israel and bread. As She is crowned on the right and the left, She is embraced by the two divine arms (*Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*), and blessings flow to the world.

On joy symbolizing the right side, see *Zohar* 1:229b. On wine symbolizing the left side, see *Zohar* 1:238a, 239b–240a. On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18. On bread as a symbol of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:240a, 246a; Vol. 3, p. 506, n. 911; Galante. For a different interpretation of "bread," see *OY*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

169. **I left this word…** I refrained from offering this same profound interpretation because I thought that you were not yet mature enough for it.

For another interpretation, see *DE*; Soncino; *Sullam*. On the crown of Torah, see M *Avot* 4:13.

170. **Why Aaron and not Moses?…** Because Aaron symbolizes *Ḥesed*, which is also symbolized by water. When the left side—characterized by *Din* (harsh Judgment)—draws and conveys the water, it will turn into blood.

For other answers to this same question, see above at notes 137–38.

171. **Lowest of all rungs…** The lowest of the demonic rungs suffered the first plague: blood.

172. **His hand struck…** Each of the ten fingers of the divine hand(s) delivered one of the ten plagues, striking one of the ten demonic rungs as well as the Egyptians below. The final plague (killing the firstborn) was directed against the highest rung, the demonic firstborn.

On God's finger delivering a plague, see Exodus 8:15, where the Egyptian soothsayers respond to the plague of lice by exclaiming: *It is the finger of God!*

On God Himself delivering the final plague directly, see Exodus 12:12, 29; *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 7, 13; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 26:8; and the midrashic reading in the Passover Haggadah, *"I will pass through the land of Egypt—*

I and not an angel. *And I will strike down every firstborn*—I and not a seraph. *And upon all the gods of Egypt I will render judgment, I, YHVH*—I am He, and no other."

173. **Pharaoh's dominion was by water…** The context in Ezekiel (29:3–4) reads: *Thus says Adonai YHVH: I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great sea serpent sprawling amidst his streams, who said, "My Nile is mine; I made it for myself." I will put hooks in your jaws and make the fish of your streams cling to your scales. I will haul you up from your streams, with all the fish of your streams clinging to your scales*. See above at note 143.

174. **frogs wielding eerie voices…** According to the Midrash, the frogs entered the bodies of the Egyptians and screeched from inside of them.

See *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 8; *Shemot Rabbah* 10:6; *Sekhel Tov* and Rashi on Exodus 7:29. Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 7:29; *Tanḥuma, Bo* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bo* 6; *Shemot Rabbah* 10:3.

The subject of the concluding phrase ("until they fell dead…") is apparently the Egyptians. See below at notes 184, 187.

"Eerie" renders טסירין (*tesirin*), a Zoharic neologism that sometimes means "specter, spirit," perhaps derived playfully from the root טוס (*tus*), "to fly." See *Zohar* 1:17b, 20b, 178a; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David* , s.v. *tesirin*.

175. ***into your bedroom…*** The verse concludes: *onto your bed, into your servants' houses, upon your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls.*

176. ***Rachel weeping for her children…*** The verse concludes: *refusing to be comforted for her children, because they are no more*.

177. **This verse has been established…** See *Zohar* 1:203a, 210a; 3:20b; *ZḤ* 92a–b (*MhN, Eikhah*)

178. **Rachel's children…** Rachel had only two children (Joseph and Benjamin), who fathered three of the twelve tribes (Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin), whereas

Leah had six children (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun) who fathered six tribes. It seems, then, that Leah should have wept over the exiles.

179. ***Leah's eyes were weak…*** According to midrashic tradition, Leah heard that she and Rachel were to be married respectively to Rebecca's two sons Esau and Jacob, and that since she was the elder daughter, her husband would be Esau, Rebecca's elder son. She then went out to the crossroads to inquire from passersby about the character of the two young men. When she heard that Esau was wicked and Jacob virtuous, she begged God to save her from having to marry Esau, weeping so profusely that her eyes became *weak*. Rachel, on the other hand, was quite satisfied with her prospective husband and never ventured out. Consequently, Leah was granted burial within the cave of Machpelah alongside Jacob, whereas Rachel was buried at the crossroads where she died—and where eventually she would weep over the exiles.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 70:16; 71:2; 82:10; *Targum Yerushalmi* and *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Genesis 29:17; BT *Bava Batra* 123a; *Tanḥuma, Vayetse* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayetse* 12, 20; *Zohar* 1:223a.

180. **Mystery of Rachel and Leah…** Rachel symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is relatively revealed, whereas Leah symbolizes *Binah*, who is concealed. Appropriately, Rachel was buried by the road, and Leah within the cave of Machpelah.

The full verse in Genesis 48 reads: *As for me, when I was returning from Paddan, Rachel died to my sorrow in the land of Canaan on the way, with still a stretch of land to reach Ephrath, and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath—which is Bethlehem*.

See Genesis 35:16–19; 49:31; *Zohar* 1:152a (*ST*), 153a–154b, 157b–158b, 223a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 97–98; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 66 (83); idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 41, 45.

181. **Assembly of Israel is called Rachel…** *Shekhinah*, who shares in Israel's exile, is known as Assembly of Israel and is symbolized by Rachel. The word רחל (*raḥel*) also means "sheep," and as a sheep is *silent before her shearers*, so *Shekhinah* is silent when other nations rule Her people, because She is cut off from Her partner, *Tif'eret*, symbolized by "voice." This voice has now withdrawn from Her and is heard only *on a height*—apparently in the realm of *Binah*, who is known as "Jerusalem above."

On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18. On the identification of Israel with Rachel, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 71:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 20:2. On their intimate connection, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 82:10; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 79. On *Tif'eret* as voice, see ibid.

On the image of "Jerusalem above," see *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 1: "There is a Jerusalem above aligned with Jerusalem below. Out of His love for the one below, He fashioned another above.… He has sworn that His presence will not enter the heavenly Jerusalem until the earthly Jerusalem is rebuilt."

See Revelation 21:2; *Targum Yonatan*, Psalms 122:3; BT *Ta'anit* 5a; *Zohar* 1:1b, 80b (*ST*), 114a (*MhN*), 129a, 183b, 231a; 2:38a, 51a; 3:15b, 68b, 147b.

182. **אינגו (*einennu*), *they are no more*…** The word אינגו (*einennu*) means literally "he is no more." In the verse in Jeremiah its simple sense is understood to refer distributively to *her children*, so it can be translated *they are no more*. Rabbi Shim'on, however, insists on reading the word hyperliterally: *he is no more*—referring to *Shekhinah*'s husband, *Tif'eret*, who has abandoned Her, thereby condemning their children to exile.

See *Zohar* 1:210a; 3:20b; *ZḤ* 92a–b (*MhN, Eikhah*). Cf. above at note 80.

183. **inflicted upon the Egyptians…** In retaliation for the weeping they brought upon *Shekhinah*.

The verse concludes: *the like of which there has not been and the like of which there will not be again*.

184. **prepared other voices…** In retaliation for the withdrawal of the divine voice, caused by Egypt's subjugation of Israel.

On the shrieking of the frogs, see above, note 174.

185. **There was one…** Exodus 8:2 reads literally: *Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and* הצפרדע (*ha-tsefarde'a*), *the frog, came up and covered the land of Egypt*. In the Midrash, this collective singular is interpreted hyperliterally by Rabbi Akiva, who insisted that a single frog came up and then bred so prolifically that it filled the whole land.

See BT *Sanhedrin* 67b; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 8; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 14; *Shemot Rabbah* 10:4; Rashi on the verse. Cf. Exodus 8:17; 10:4.

186. **surrendered themselves to the fire…** By entering the hot ovens.

The *water* mentioned in the verse in Psalms alludes here to the moist dough in the kneading bowls. The clause *You brought us out to abundance* alludes to the propagation of the frogs, which Rabbi Shim'on proceeds to describe.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *The Nile will swarm frogs and they will come up and come into your house, into your bedroom, onto your bed, into your servants' houses, upon your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls*.

See BT *Pesaḥim* 53b; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 19; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 14; *Midrash Tehillim* 28:2; *Shemot Rabbah* 10:2; *Zohar* 3:232b.

187. **When they came to eat…** When the Egyptians ate some of the bread, it turned back into frogs inside their intestines, and the Egyptians died from the frogs' shrieking.

See above, note 174. Cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 10:2.

188. **Pharaoh was punished first…** The verse specifies Pharaoh first and then continues: *into your*

servants' houses, upon your people. See the following verse.

The line "May the name of God be blessed forever and ever" is from Daniel 2:20.

189. ***Pharaoh's courtiers saw her…*** The antecedent is Sarah, Abraham's wife, who was seized by Pharaoh. According to Rabbi Shim'on, the three appearances of the word *Pharaoh* in this verse allude to three different Pharaohs.

"His blows" refers to the blows of Moses' staff, which fell upon Pharaoh and his people. See above, note 101. On the line "This verse comes in order to be expounded," see BT *Megillah* 2b, *Yevamot* 54b, *Qiddushin* 4a, *Sanhedrin* 55a; *Zohar* 2:160b, 175a; 3:32a, 87b, 267a; *ZḤ* 25d (*MhN*), 86a–b (*MhN, Rut*); Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 2a; Matt, "New-Ancient Words," 198.

190. **This verse is completely established…** Rabbi Shim'on concedes that the verse in Genesis can be interpreted simply as referring to one Pharaoh—the one who reigned in the time of Abraham. However, he adds a new element to the biblical story that pertains also to the subsequent Pharaohs. The first of these three Pharaohs had a picture of Sarah painted above his bed and even took a wooden image of her into bed with him; his successors continued reveling lasciviously in Sarah's image. Consequently, the Pharaoh of Exodus was punished more severely than all his subjects: whereas frogs entered the houses of his servants and people, only of Pharaoh is it written *into your bedroom, onto your bed*.

See Galante; *Nefesh David; MmD*. The full verse in Exodus reads: *The Nile will swarm frogs and they will come up and come into your house, into your bedroom, onto your bed, into your servants' houses, upon your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls*.

191. ***to the place the streams flow…*** Or, *to the place* [*from*] *which the streams flow, there they flow back again*.

The simple sense of the verse may reflect the popular belief that the water flowing into the sea from rivers flows back to those rivers through tunnels. Here, Rabbi Abba understands it to mean that the waters continue to flow into the sea.

On earlier rabbinic interpretations of the verse, see *Qohelet Rabbah*, ad loc. The verse is expounded frequently in the *Zohar*.

192. **When those supernal streams…** When the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod* flow into the sea of *Shekhinah*, She gathers them. *Shekhinah* tends toward *Din* (Judgment), so the waters congeal within Her and cannot issue below until they are thawed by the warmth of *Ḥesed* (symbolized by south). The *beasts of the field* are the angelic forces beneath *Shekhinah*, who receive the flow of emanation and convey it to the worlds below. Since the waters of the sea thaw and flow onward, *the sea is* never *full*.

See *Zohar* 1:29a–b, 152a, 161b, 235a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 341. On the sea's absorption of waters, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:9; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:7.

"Been aroused by this" renders אתערו ביה (*it'aru beih*). In medieval Hebrew, the corresponding idiom refers to "having one's awareness aroused," "arousing the [latent or potential] meaning" of a particular word or phrase, "expounding, interpreting." See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 392; Ben-Yehuda, *Dictionary*, 5:4392a–b.

193. **that river issuing from Eden…** The expression derives from Genesis 2:10: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden*. In the *Zohar* the river is the flow of emanation issuing from *Ḥokhmah*, conveyed by *Binah* through *Yesod*, entering the garden (or sea) of *Shekhinah*.

North symbolizes *Din*; south, *Ḥesed*. *Shekhinah* dwells between the two poles, sustained by their rhythm of congealing and thawing.

The ships are the angelic potencies sailing the sea of *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:34b, 124a; 2:48b, 50b, 54a, 56a. On

the phrase *they continue to flow*, see *Zohar* 2:50b; 3:58a.

194. **When the King comes to His bed…** When *Tif'eret* comes to unite with *Shekhinah* at midnight, passion is aroused by the divine left arm, *Gevurah* (symbolized by north); then the right arm, *Ḥesed* (symbolized by south), embraces *Shekhinah*, who utters the appropriate verse from Song of Songs.

The jesters are angels delighting the divine couple and celebrating their union. "All those above and below" apparently refers to the angels above and all creatures below. The people of Israel imitate the angels by rising at midnight to praise God and study Torah. In the morning, afternoon, and evening they pray the appropriate prayers.

See BT *Berakhot* 3b: "Rabbi Shim'on the Ḥasid said, 'There was a harp suspended above [King] David's bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn.'" On the corresponding kabbalistic ritual of midnight study, see above, note 106.

On *Shekhinah* as "bed," see *Zohar* 1:37a, 225b, 248b; 2:5a (*MhN*), 48b, 51a; 3:60a, 114a, 118b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 370. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 55b, where it is said that Jacob kept a bed in his tent for *Shekhinah*. See Rashi on Genesis 49:4. According to the eleventh-century Catholic reformer Peter Damian, Mary is the golden couch upon which God, tired out by the actions of humanity and the angels, lies down to rest. See Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess*, 280.

On *Matronita* as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 21. On the verse from Song of Songs, see *Zohar* 1:49a–b, 133a, 136a, 151a, 163b, 189a, 244a, 245a, 250a; 2:154b, 169b, 238b; 3:26a, 55a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 341–42; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 63.

On the verse in Job, see *Zohar* 1:189a. The verse from Isaiah reads in full: *Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set*

watchmen; all day and all night they will never be silent. O you who praise YHVH, do not be silent!

195. **blessed Holy One remembered them…** Foreseeing Israel's constant devotion, He redeemed them from Egyptian slavery. Pharaoh, who "seized the holy people," was punished by the frogs, whose constant croaking and shrieking prevented the Egyptians from conversing with one another.

On the noise of the frogs, see above, note 174.

196. **decimating…** טרטשי (*Tarteshei*), "crumbling," apparently based on the root טרש (*trsh*), "to batter," and טרש (*teresh*), "stony ground." See *Zohar* 1:37a, 239b.

197. **how many rivers…** Numerous forces (symbolized by rivers and fish) convey emanation from the sea of *Shekhinah* to the worlds below. These forces include various angels, among them the heavenly princes appointed over the nations of the world.

On the heavenly princes, see above, p. 19, n. 71; p. 21, n. 80. On fish swimming within the ocean of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 55 and n. 243. On the effects of different types of water, see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 20:22; *Midrash Tehillim* 5:1; *Zohar* 1:125a (*MhN*); 3:101a.

198. **masters of sorcery…ten sorcerous rungs…** The Egyptians derived their knowledge of sorcery from forces linked with ten demonic rungs beneath the ten *sefirot*.

See *Zohar* 1:166b–167a; 3:41b, 70a. Commentators suggest various ways to identify ten distinct types in the list from Deuteronomy. See Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*. *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:11 includes the beginning of the first verse (*There shall not be found among you one who passes his son or his daughter through fire*), thereby eliciting the decade more easily.

On Egyptian expertise in sorcery, see Exodus 7:11; *Bereshit Rabbah* 86:5; BT *Qiddushin* 49b, *Menaḥot* 85b; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 12; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:6–7; *Zohar* 1:83a, 249a; 2:25a; 3:50b.

“Small-mouthed” renders בסיטין (*besitin*), apparently derived from Castilian *boca*, “mouth,” with the diminutive suffix *ita*. See *Ma’arikh*, s.v. *bosita*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 134–35; Corominas, *Diccionario*, 1:603–4. Cf. Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *besit*; *Sullam*.

“Bound” renders קפיטין (*qefitin*), perhaps a play on כפיתין (*kefitin*), “bound,” or based on the Zoharic neologistic root קפטר (*qftr*), which often connotes “tying, linking.” See Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David* , s.v. *qifta*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 349–54.

199. **their fish of wisdom were impeded…** The forces above, normally conveying sorcerous wisdom to the Egyptians, were confounded, while below on earth the water turned to the blood and the frogs (“fish”) croaked and shrieked, failing to derive or convey any wisdom.

200. **ערוב (*Arov*), *Mixture*…** The fourth plague was a “mixture” or horde. This term was often understood as a mingling of wild animals, though its simple sense may well be a horde or swarm of insects. See Exodus 8:17; Sarna, *Exodus*, ad loc.

Rabbi Abba skips from the second plague (frogs) to the fourth plague (mixture) because both of these indicate a failure of the Egyptians’ sorcery; the mixture of animals signifies the confounding of sorcerous wisdom. The animals themselves (“those found on land”) intermingled and interbred, as indicated by the term *arov*, a cognate of ערבוביא (*irbuvya*), “confusion.”

The verse in Leviticus reads: *Your beast: you shall not mate different kinds; your field you shall not sow with different kinds; and a garment of different kinds*, שעטנז (*sha’atnez*), *shall not be donned by you*. The word כלאים (*kil’ayim*), *two* [or: *different*] *kinds*, is rendered by *Targum Onqelos* as עירובין (*eruvin*), “mixtures,” and by *Targum Yerushalmi* as עירבובין (*irbuvin*), “confusions.” The etymology and meaning of *sha’atnez* are uncertain. See Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1664.

On the phrase בארמת ירא (*be-aramat yeda*), “by raising the hand, cast by the hand,” see BT *Berakhot* 22a, in the name of Rabbi Yoshiyah: “One is not guilty [of violating the law of *kil’ayim*, different kinds] until he sows wheat, barley, and grape kernels במפולת יד (*be-mappolet yad*), with the drop of the hand [i.e., with a single throw].”

201. **with one hand…** On God’s mighty hand, see Exodus 13:9.

The verse in Isaiah is actually uttered concerning the Judeans. See *Zohar* 1:125a (*MhN*); 2:6b.

202. ***Egypt against Egypt—above and below…*** The heavenly prince of Egypt and his powers above, and the Egyptians below.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *I will incite Egypt against Egypt* [or: *Egyptian against Egyptian*], *and they will battle one another, neighbor against neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom*.

203. **Lice raised by the dust…** The third plague. כנים (*Kinnim*) may mean “gnats,” “mosquitoes,” or “lice.”

On the link between vegetation and heavenly power, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:6, in the name of Rabbi Simon: “You cannot find a single blade of grass [below (per Oxford MS 147)] that does not have a constellation in the sky, striking it and telling it: ‘Grow!’”

See Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 2:10; *Zohar* 1:34a; 2:171b; 3:86a; *ZḤ* 8b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 181, 294; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 135.

204. **seven heavens… seven earths…** On the seven heavens, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12b: “Rabbi Yehudah said, ‘There are two רקיעים (*reqi’im*), firmaments [or: heavens]….’ Resh Lakish said, ‘Seven, namely, וילון (*Vilon*), Curtain; רקיע (*Raqi’a*), Expanse; שחקים (*Sheḥaqim*), Heaven; זבול (*Zevul*), Loft; מעון (*Ma’on*), Dwelling; מכון (*Makhon*), Site [or: Foundation]; ערבות (*Aravot*), Clouds.’”

The seven zones of earth correspond to the “seven climates,” the seven inhabitable regions recognized in

Ptolemaic and medieval geography. See *Sefer Yetsirah* 4:12; Ibn Ezra on Genesis 1:2; *Zohar* 1:177a; 3:9b–10a; Galante.

Here, Rabbi Abba also refers to another depiction of "seven earths," namely seven strata of earth. See *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit* 9 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:24); *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:32–33); *Zohar* 1:9b, 39b–40a (*Heikh*), 54b, 157a; 3:9b–10a; *ZḤ* 9b–c, 12a (*MhN*), 87b (*MhN, Rut*); Galante. Cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:11; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 37.

Rabbi Abba indicates that in the divine realm there are also seven heavens (perhaps the seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*, or seven aspects of *Tif'eret*) and seven earths (apparently palaces of *Shekhinah*, who is known as "earth").

"Strata" is a conjectural rendering of סופטא (*sufta*), perhaps based on סיפתא (*sifta*), "lip, edge, border, hem," or סיפטא (*sifta*), "box." See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:2, who describes the arrangement of the numerous heavenly spheres "like skins of onions." See *Zohar* 3:9b; *OY*; Galante; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *sifta*. For other interpretations, see *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 183; *DE*.

205. **seven zones... divide...** The seven palaces of *Shekhinah* each divide into ten aspects, empowering the seventy heavenly princes of the nations of the world. *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the land of Israel, is thus surrounded by seventy powers, just as the earthly Holy Land lies in the center of the world, encircled by all the nations. The *sixty warriors* mentioned in Song of Songs represent sixty of the powers surrounding *Shekhinah* (*bed of Solomon*), with the remaining ten concealed among them.

See 1:37a, 177a; 2:5a (*MhN*), 51a; 3:60a. On the heavenly princes, see above, p. 19, n. 71; p. 21, n. 80. On the land of Israel as the center of the world, see *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 10. On *Shekhinah* as "bed," see above, note 194.

206. **extended His finger… glowing marshals…** God generated fiery forces that dried up all the moisture of the earth and all the vegetation. Consequently, the dust generated lice.

In Exodus 8:15, the Egyptian soothsayers respond to this plague by exclaiming: *It is the finger of God!*

"Glowing marshals" renders טפסירין (*tafsirin*), which here may combine the normal sense of טפסר (*tifsar*), "military or administrative official, marshal," with טפסא (*tifsa*), which in the *Zohar* sometimes means "glowing embers." See *Zohar* 1:218a, 242a; 3:111a; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 178–80; Galante; *DE*; *NO*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David* , s.v. *tifsa*; *NZ*.

207. **Yet…Aaron struck…** According to Exodus 8:13, Aaron struck the dust of the earth with his staff, upon which the dust turned to lice. Was it Aaron or God who initiated this miracle? Rabbi Abba explains that Aaron symbolizes *Ḥesed*, the divine right hand, and his act of striking the dust demonstrated the immense power of that hand.

For the midrashic explanation of why Aaron (rather than Moses) struck the dust, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 8:12; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 19; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 14; *Shemot Rabbah* 10:7.

208. **the same upon wicked Rome…** The verse in Isaiah applies to Edom, which in rabbinic literature refers to the Roman Empire, and in medieval Jewish literature to Christianity. Eventually, Israel's enemy will suffer the same fate as Egypt. Here, Rabbi Abba specifies that "wicked Rome" will be struck with the plague of lice, as indicated by Isaiah's use of the word *dust*—which alludes to lice, as demonstrated by the verse in Exodus.

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 7:11; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 13, *Bo* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 15, *Bo* 6; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:13; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Exodus 182. The verse in Isaiah concludes: *and her land will become burning pitch*.

209. **Caleb…** Of the twelve tribal chieftains sent by Moses to scout out the land of Canaan, only Caleb and

Joshua returned with a favorable report, insisting that God would enable the Israelites to prevail against the Canaanites.

The verse in Numbers concludes: *I will bring him to the land to which he came and his seed will possess it*.

210. **Why *he came*...** Why does the verse switch from the plural (*they went up*) to the singular (*he came*)? Because Caleb separated from the other spies and came alone to Hebron, the burial site of the patriarchs. There he prostrated himself on their graves, begging them to pray that he be delivered from the plan of the other spies, who conspired to issue a negative report on the land.

See BT *Sotah* 34b; Rashi on Numbers 13:22; *Zohar* 2:16b (*MhN*); 3:158b.

211. **Hebron was given to him...** When the land of Canaan was divided among the tribes, Caleb was given Hebron—*the land on which he* [alone] *has tread*.

See Joshua 14:6–15; Judges 1:20; Rashi on Numbers 13:22; Rashi and Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 1:36. On the phrase "to be saved from that plan," see the preceding note.

212. **Since Saul had already died...** Why was David first enthroned only over the territory of Judah and not over all of Israel?

On David's reign in Hebron, see 2 Samuel 2:11. On the reign of Saul's son Ish-bosheth, see ibid., 8–10. On the question and answer here, see *Zohar* 1:79b.

213. **Holy Kingdom did not receive...** *Shekhinah*, known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom), did not attain full dominion until She was united with the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the patriarchs). Thereby, She was completed by *Binah*, the upper world, who is called *seven years* because She contains and generates all seven lower *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*.

The simple meaning of the verse in Kings, describing Solomon's building of the Temple, is *He built it in seven*

years. However, the Hebrew wording does not include the preposition ב (*be*), "in," and Rabbi Ḥiyya exploits this lack, suggesting that *Binah* (symbolized by the Temple) was *built* or fashioned to consist of *seven years*, that is, to include the sefirotic septet. (He is also playing on בינה [*binah*], "understanding," and ויבנהו [*va-yivnehu*], *he built it*.)

Similarly, the verse in Exodus, usually understood to mean *In six days YHVH made heaven and earth*, can also be read hyperliterally: *Six days YHVH made*, that is, *Binah* (*YHVH*) emanated *six* cosmic *days* (the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*), thereby generating *Tif'eret* (*heaven*) and *Shekhinah* (*earth*). Here, Rabbi Ḥiyya proceeds to offer a slightly different hyperliteral reading, focusing on Abraham's *sefirah, Ḥesed*.

On the full dominion of *Malkhut*, see *Zohar* 1:79b, 99a, 125a, 246b–247a. On the verse in Kings, see *Zohar* 1:147b (*ST*), 247a; 2:9b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 8; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 72.

On the verse in Exodus, see Exodus 31:17; Ibn Ezra on Genesis 14:4; *Bahir* 39 (57), 55 (82); Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:11; *Zohar* 1:30a, 247a; 2:89b; 3:94b, 103b, 298b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 134; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 81b.

214. **Who is *six days*? Abraham...** Abraham symbolizes *Ḥesed*, which is the first cosmic day issuing from *Binah* and which includes potentially the other five cosmic days through *Yesod*. Thus through Abraham, the sefirotic realm and the world below were constructed.

According to Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Korḥah (*Bereshit Rabbah* 12:9), the word בהבראם (*be-hibbare'am*), *when they were created*, is an anagram of באברהם (*be-Avraham*), "through Abraham," indicating that *heaven and earth* were created for his sake.

See *Zohar* 1:3b, 86b, 91b, 93a, 105b, 128b, 154b, 230b, 247a; 2:48b, 79a, 220b; 3:117a. Cf. 1:46a.

215. **David wished…** David could not attain complete kingship until he joined the patriarchs, who were buried in the cave of Machpelah in Hebron. This corresponds to the sefirotic pattern: King David's *sefirah, Malkhut* (Kingdom), is completed only by the triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, symbolized respectively by the three patriarchs. David's seven years in Hebron correspond to the seven lower *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Malkhut*.

216. **Similarly, Caleb…** He was a chieftain of the tribe of Judah, who, as progenitor of the Davidic dynasty, symbolizes *Malkhut* (Kingdom). By joining the patriarchs in Hebron, Caleb symbolized and actualized the union of *Malkhut* with *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*.

On Judah as symbol of *Malkhut*, see above, note 112.

217. **from Cappadocia to Lydda…** Such a journey recurs frequently in the *Zohar* and usually includes an encounter with some surprising character. See 1:69b, 132a, 138a (*MhN*), 160a, 223a, 243b; 2:38b, 80b, 86a; 3:35a, 75b, 221b; *ZḤ* 22a (*MhN*).

The itinerary from Cappadocia in eastern Asia Minor to Lydda in Palestine may be intentionally fantastic; alternatively, the author(s) may have imagined (or pretended) that Cappadocia was a Galilean village near Sepphoris, based on the phrase "Cappadocians of Sepphoris" in JT *Shevi'it* 9:5, 39a. According to a dream interpretation in *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:12, Cappadocia is not far at all from Palestine. Cappadocia figures prominently in M *Ketubbot* 13:11 and BT *Ketubbot* 110b, while Cappadocia and Lydda are linked in *Tosefta Yevamot* 4:5; JT *Yevamot* 2:9, 4a–b; and BT *Yevamot* 25b.

See Galante; Scholem, "She'elot be-Viqqoret ha-Zohar," 40–46 (and the appended note by S. Klein, 56); idem, *Major Trends*, 169; idem, *Kabbalah*, 222; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:63–64.

The first part of this story (until p. 130 at n. 226) also appears in *Zohar* 1:197b.

218. **skin of wine** קטפירא דחמרא (*Qatpira de-ḥamra*). *Qatpira* is a Zoharic neologism that embraces several meanings, including “waterskin, wineskin.”

See Psalms 119:83; *Zohar* 1:33a, 72a; Galante; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 349–50. Cf. *DE*.

219. **one of those sublime words…** The expression derives from the Talmud and appears often in the *Zohar*. See BT *Berakhot* 8b, *Ta’anit* 20b, *Ḥagigah* 14a; *Zohar* 1:49b, 87a, 96b; 3:148a, 209b, 231a.

The Holy Lamp—בוצינא קדישא (*Botsina Qaddisha*)—is Rabbi Shim’on, hero of the *Zohar*. See *Zohar* 1:3b–4a, 156a, 197b, 217a; 2:4a, 123b; 3:171a; *ZḤ* 85d (*MhN, Rut*).

See 2 Samuel 21:17; *Bereshit Rabbah* 85:4; BT *Ketubbot* 17a, where Rabbi Abbahu is called בוצינא דנהורא (*Botsina di-Nhora*), “Lamp of Light”; and *Berakhot* 28b, where Rabban Yoḥanan son of Zakkai is called נר ישראל (*Ner Yisra’el*), “Lamp of Israel.”

220. ***Her ways…* coin in a flask…** Rabbi Ḥizkiyah opens with a verse appropriate for the road. The rabbis’ traveling companion responds by playing on a folk saying reported by Ulla in BT *Bava Metsi’a* 85b: “A coin in a bottle goes *qish qish*.” There, the point is that a scholar in a family of fools is conspicuous; here, the verse clinks with hidden wisdom.

The Talmudic wording is: איסתירא בלגינא קיש קיש קריא (*Isteira bilgina qish qish qareya*), “A *stater* [coin] in a bottle goes *qish qish*.” Here, the phrase is: איסירא בקיסרא (*isira beqisra*). The word *isira* derives from איסרא (*issara*), a Roman copper coin, and is here a play on *isteira*. *Qisra* may echo *qish qish qareya*, though at the same time it apparently implies *legina*, “bottle.” Or perhaps, it is a play on כיס (*kis*), “pocket.” See *Zohar* 2:99a. Or it may refer to an image of Caesar on the coin.

221. ***Who makes a way through the sea*** The full verse reads: *Who makes a way through the sea, a path through mighty waters*.

222. **ways opened by the patriarchs…** The patriarchs symbolize the *sefirot Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. They channel the flow of emanation into the sea of *Shekhinah*, by whom the entire world is then nourished.

See Numbers 21:18, quoted in *Zohar* 3:150a–b, 286a; and 1:208a. On the distinction between "way" and "path," see *Zohar* 2:215a; 3:88a.

223. **the world that is coming…** *Binah*, from whom radiate the lower *sefirot* ("lamps").

עלמא דאתי (*Alma de-atei*) is the Aramaic equivalent of the rabbinic Hebrew העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*), "the world that is coming." This concept is often understood as referring to the hereafter and is usually translated as "the world to come." From another point of view, however, "the world that is coming" already exists, occupying another dimension. See *Tanḥuma, Vayiqra* 8: "The wise call it *ha-olam ha-ba* not because it does not exist now, but for us today in this world it is still to come." Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 8:8; and Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, 37: "'The world to come' does not succeed 'this world' in time, but exists from eternity as a reality outside and above time, to which the soul ascends."

In Kabbalah "the world that is coming" often refers to *Binah*, the continuous source of emanation. See *Zohar* 3:290b (*IZ*): "the world that is coming, constantly coming, never ceasing." Cf. *Bahir* 106 (160); Asher ben David, *Peirush Shelosh Esreh Middot*, in *Kabbalah* 2 (1997), 293; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 26 (30); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot*, 375; *Zohar* 1:83a, 92a, 141b.

224. **the world that is coming is called *delightfulness*…** Since *Binah* is the source of joy and liberation, She Herself is called נעם (*no'am*), *delightfulness*.

See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 8:4; *Zohar* 1:219a; 2:57b, 127a, 170b; 3:161b; *ZḤ* 85b (*MhN, Rut*).

225. **the wicked in Hell all rest…** Even they enjoy the tranquility of the Sabbath day. The end of Sabbath marks the return of the wicked to the torments of Hell, and at that moment Jews recite the verse from Psalms to ensure that divine *delightfulness* will overwhelm any demonic powers that could threaten them on earth.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:5; BT *Sanhedrin* 65b; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 33; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23; *Zohar* 1:14b, 17b, 237b; 2:88b, 150b–151a, 203b, 207a; 3:94b, 288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 17a–b (*MhN*).

226. **Those paths emerging from above…** *Sefer Yetsirah*, the foundational text of Kabbalah, opens by describing "thirty-two wondrous paths of wisdom." These paths, originating in *Hokhkmah* (Wisdom), are more subtle than the ways (see above, end of note 222). They meet in *Yesod*, the covenant of peace, who then conducts them into the sea of *Shekhinah*, calming Her agitation, which is caused by forces of judgment.

Yesod, the divine phallus and site of the covenant of circumcision, also brings peace by uniting *Tif'eret* with *Shekhinah*. See BT *Shabbat* 152a, where Rabbi Shim'on son of Halafta refers to the phallus as "peacemaker of the home." See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1; *Zohar* 1:150b, 193b; 3:31a, 115b.

The phrase כד איהו בתוקפיה (*kad ihu betuqpeih*), "when it is agitated," can also be rendered "when He is potent," referring not to the sea of *Shekhinah* but to *Yesod*. See BT *Ḥagigah* 15a: "Shemu'el said, 'Any emission of semen that does not shoot forth like an arrow does not fructify.'" See *Zohar* 1:6a. The root *tqf* has a wide range of meaning in the *Zohar* and evidence can be found for each interpretation—both of which, conceivably, may be intended here.

227. **three fatal plagues…** Three of the ten plagues brought upon the Egyptians: pestilence, hail, and killing of the firstborn.

228. ***Look, the hand of YHVH…*** The verse concludes: *against the horses, against the donkeys, against the camels, against the cattle, and against the sheep—a very severe pestilence*.

After the third plague (lice) struck, the Egyptian soothsayers exclaimed, *It is the finger of God!* (Exodus 8:15). Now, with the fifth plague (pestilence), the complete *hand of YHVH* attacked the Egyptians, each divine finger killing one animal species. No other plague is described in such terms.

229. **Egyptians failed to return…** By letting Israel leave. Consequently, the letters of the word דבר (*dever*), "pestilence," switched their positions, turning into the word ברד (*barad*), "hail." Compared with the furious pounding of hail, the plague of pestilence was relatively gentle, causing the animals to die on their own from disease.

The phrase "letters appearing gently" apparently alludes to the soft letter ב (*vet*)—written without a *dagesh* (dot)—in the word דֶבֶר (*dever*), "pestilence." "Letters reversing with intense fury" would then refer not only to the letters' switched positions but also to the hard letter ב (*bet*)—written with a *dagesh*—in the word בָּרָד (*barad*), "hail." On the deadly impact of the hail, see Exodus 9:19, 22–25.

230. **waterskins filled with slag** The animals had apparently died from toxic slag water.

On קטפירי (*qatpirei*), "waterskins," see above, note 218. "Slag" renders אקוסטרא (*aqustera*), which probably derives from קסטירא (*qastira*), based on Greek *kassiteros*, "tin." Here, the author may have in mind the Hebrew word for tin, בְּדִיל (*bedil*)—or rather, its near homonym, בָּדִיל (*badil*), "slag." See Isaiah 1:25. In *Zohar* 3:83b (*Piq*), the form קסטורא (*qastora*) is parallel with פסולת (*pesolet*), "dross."

On *qastira*, see *Targum Yerushalmi* and *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Numbers 31:22; *Zohar* 1:125a, 151a; 2:24b (above, note 62); *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 186, 188; *Ma'arikh*, s.v. *qstr*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David* , s.v. *qastera*; Liebes,

Peraqim, 349. For other interpretations, see Galante ("poison"); *DE* ("worms").

231. ***I will make of you a great nation…*** The rabbis' companion paraphrases an interpretation of Rabbi El'azar's, in which the various divine promises given to Abraham (Genesis 12:2) are correlated with the specific commands in the preceding verse.

Rabbi El'azar's original teaching appears in *Zohar* 1:78a. Genesis 12:2 concludes: *and you will be a blessing*. Genesis 12:1 reads: *YHVH said to Abram, "Go you forth from your land, from your birthplace* [or: *kinfolk*], *from your father's house to the land that I will show you*."

232. **Rabbi Shim'on said…** Now, the Jew quotes a sefirotic interpretation offered by Rabbi El'azar's father, Rabbi Shim'on. The first phase of the blessing derives from *Ḥesed*, also known as *Gedullah* (Greatness), on the right side. The second phase derives from *Gevurah* on the left; the third, from *Tif'eret*, who balances right and left. The final phase derives from *Shekhinah*, who symbolizes the land of Israel.

Abraham perfected and attained the quality of *Ḥesed*. His son and grandson (Isaac and Jacob) attained respectively the qualities of *Gevurah* and *Tif'eret*. The sefirotic tetrad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Shekhinah* constitutes a chariot or throne for the highest level of divinity. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6: "Resh Lakish said, 'The patriarchs themselves constitute the [divine] Chariot.'"

See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 57; *Zohar* 1:60b, 99a, 150a, 154b, 173b, 186a, 222b, 223b–224a, 248b; 2:23b, 144a; 3:38a, 99a, 146a, 182a, 262b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 239–40. On the fourth leg of the divine chariot-throne, see Vol. 3, p. 134, n. 311. Rabbi Shim'on's original teaching appears in *Zohar* 1:78a.

233. **Through arousal below…** If a human being initiates holy action below, holiness arouses above and flows down upon him.

On this general principle of Kabbalah, see *Zohar* 1:35a, 77b–78a, 82b, 86b, 88a, 156b, 164a–b, 233a, 235a, 244a; 2:35b, 265a; 3:31b, 40b, 47b, 92a–b, 105a, 110b, 112b, 145a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 144. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 104a: "Resh Lakish said, '… If one comes to defile himself, he is provided an opening; if one comes to purify himself, he is assisted.'"

This passage (until below at note 237) is based on *Zohar* 1:77b–78a.

234. **What is written of Abraham?…** The verse reads: *Terah took Abram his son and Lot son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, wife of Abram his son, and they set out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan*.

The question is, why does the verse read *they* [i.e., Abram, Lot, and Sarai] *set out with them*? One would expect *they set out with him* [i.e., with Terah]. The Jew explains that the point of the verse is that Terah and Lot *set out with them* [i.e., with Abram and Sarai]. Once Abram was miraculously saved from the fiery furnace of King Nimrod, Terah acknowledged the one true God, thereby fulfilling Abram's desire; so the verse highlights the fact that Terah along with Lot followed the lead of the righteous couple, Abram and Sarai, setting out *with them*.

The conclusion of the verse, *to go to the land of Canaan*, illustrates the principle noted above, that divine arousal is stimulated by virtuous human action—here, Abram and Sarai's initiative in setting out. Consequently, God issued His command: *Go you forth!*

On the wording *they set out with them*, see Rashi on Genesis 11:31; Naḥmanides on Genesis 11:28, 31; *Zohar* 1:77b. On Abram's being saved from Nimrod's furnace, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 38:13; Vol. 2, pp. 5–6, n. 34. On Terah's change of heart and repentance, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 30:4; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 18; Rashi on Genesis 15:15; Ibn Ezra on

Genesis 12:1 (*Diqduq*); Naḥmanides on Genesis 11:32; *Zohar* 1:78b; 3:111b (*RM*).

235. ***Lekh lekha, Go for yourself…*** **to yourself** לך (*Lekh*) means "go." The following word, לך (*lekha*), means literally "to you, for you," though idiomatically it lends the verb the sense of "separating, taking leave of." See Exodus 18:27; Joshua 22:4; Sarna, *Genesis*, ad loc.

Here the Jew quotes a hyperliteral interpretation (or double interpretation) by Rabbi Shim'on: *Go for yourself*, for your own benefit, to refine yourself; *Go to yourself*, to know yourself.

On the sense of *for yourself*, see Rashi and Naḥmanides on the verse; *Zohar* 1:77b. Cf. 1:254b (*Hash*); 3:17b, 157a; *ZḤ* 71b (*Shir ha-Shirim*). On the sense of *to yourself*, see Philo, *On the Migration of Abraham*, 8, 11; *On Dreams*, 1:52–60; *Zohar* 1:78a; and Vital (quoted in *MM* on *Zohar* 1:78a): "Every person must search and discover the root of his soul, so that he can fulfill it and restore it to its source, its essence. The more one fulfills himself, the closer he approaches his authentic self."

236. ***From your land…*** The full verse reads: *YHVH said to Abram, "Go you forth from your land, from your birthplace* [or: *kinfolk*], *from your father's house to the land that I will show you."*

According to Rabbi Shim'on, Abraham engaged in astronomical measurement and astrological speculation relating to the precise time and place of his birth. God tells Abraham to leave such speculation behind, to reject (*go forth from*) astrology, and not to concern himself with his personal history and family roots; a different destiny awaits him.

See BT *Shabbat* 156a, in the name of Rav: "ויוצא (*Va-yotse*), *He took* (*him*) *outside* (Genesis 15:5)…. He [Abraham] said before Him [God], 'I have gazed at my horoscope, and I am not fated to engender a son.' He replied, 'צא (*Tse*), Leave,

your astrological speculations! Israel is immune from planetary influence.’”

“Gauge” renders תקיל (*taqeil*), “weigh.” Cordovero (*OY*) suggests that this term refers to measuring with an astrolabe or quadrant. The astrolabe was a circular instrument used to determine the position of the sun and stars. Originally devised by the Greeks, it was further developed by Moslem astronomers, and a description of one of the improved models was translated from Arabic into Castilian by a group of Jewish scholars working under King Alfonso X of Castile (1252–1284). See *Zohar* 1:77b–78a; 2:188a; Vol. 2, p. 8, n. 51.

237. **the power appointed over it…** Abraham sought to know which heavenly power controls the land of Israel. Eventually, God would reveal to him that this power is *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:78a.

238. ***Abram went…*** The verse continues: *as YHVH had told him*.

239. **As for us…** After transmitting these various teachings to Rabbi Yeisa and Rabbi Ḥizkiyah, the Jew advises them to imitate Abraham and continue their sacred journey. (See above, note 217.) Apparently, the passage breaks off here.

240. **Rabbi Abba opened…** Rabbi Abba’s quotation of these verses is not followed by any interpretation and is apparently intended to conclude this Torah portion on an uplifting, redemptive note. See *OY*; *MM*; *NZ*.

The passage that follows in the printed editions (2:32a) does not appear in the early and reliable manuscript T1 nor in various other manuscripts (e.g., N47, 02, O3, O17) nor in *OY*. It appears also in *Zohar* 3:93b and will be translated there. See Scholem.

1. ***Happy is the people…*** The connection between this verse and what follows here may be simply "walking" in God's light and in His ways. Alternatively, תרועה (*teru'ah*), *shout of joy*, implies the "blast" of the shofar, associated with Rosh Hashanah, which is mentioned below.

For other explanations, see Galante; Vital; idem, *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Nefesh David*; *Sullam*.

2. **accusers… below… above…** Demonic forces roaming the world, enticing and accusing human beings, and other demonic accusers above.

See M *Avot* 4:11: "Rabbi Elie'zer son of Ya'akov says, 'Whoever performs one *mitsvah* acquires one advocate, and whoever commits one transgression acquires one accuser.'"

3. **how many advocates…** Generated by his virtuous conduct. See the passage from *Avot* in the preceding note. The *ransom* that saves a person from punishment is the merit of his good deeds.

See BT *Shabbat* 32a; *ZḤ* 14c (*MhN*).

4. **why is an angel required…** Since God watches over the righteous and knows everything that a person does.

5. **All is certainly so…** Although everything is revealed before God, even the righteous have accusers—as demonstrated by what happened to Job, who suffered greatly after Satan incited God against him. Therefore, heavenly advocates are essential to counterbalance the demonic accusers.

The true nature of the demonic powers, why they are authorized over worldly matters, and how they fit into the divine plan—these constitute "ways… concealed before the blessed Holy One."

The context in Job (2:3–6) reads: *YHVH said to Satan, "Have you noticed My servant Job? For there is no one like him on earth, a man blameless and upright, revering God and shunning evil. He still holds fast to his integrity, though you incited Me against him to destroy him without cause."*

Satan answered YHVH, saying,... "But stretch out Your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face." YHVH said to Satan, "Here, he is in your hand, but spare his life."

6. ***One day...*** Literally, *It happened on the day*. According to rabbinic tradition, *the day* on which these heavenly powers assembled was Rosh Hashanah, the fateful Day of Judgment. Similarly, *the day* mentioned in Kings, on which the prophet Elisha visited the Shunammite woman, was Rosh Hashanah.

On *the day* in Job, see *Targum Yonatan* on the verse; *Midrash Iyyov* 1:6 (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:158); Rashi and Ibn Ezra on the verse; *Zohar* 3:231a; *ZḤ* 20b (*MhN*). On the same interpretation for the phrase in Kings, see *Zohar* 1:69b, 160b; 2:44a; 3:231a.

7. ***I saw YHVH...*** Avision of the prophet Micaiah.

8. **על (*al*), *against, YHVH*, surely...** The verse reads: *the sons of Elohim came to stand* על (*al*), *before, YHVH*. Rabbi El'azar reads this according to an idiomatic sense of the word על (*al*): "against." By accusing God's children of wrongdoing, the heavenly accusers gathered in effect against God.

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 6: "Whoever rises up against Israel rises up, as it were, against the blessed Holy One."

God's identification with Israel signifies both His love for them and His need for them. Israel's actions in the world are decisive: their virtuous deeds strengthen God, while their misdeeds weaken Him.

On this theme, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 319; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:12; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:33; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 25:1; *Zohar* 1:57b, 234b; 2:64a, 65b.

9. ***Also*—amplifying them...** Satan, the chief accuser and slanderer, augments the accusations of the other forces.

"Amplifying" renders לאסגאה (*le-asga'ah*), "to increase," a Zoharic translation of the rabbinic Hebrew לרבות (*le-rabbot*),

“to increase”—that is, to include, amplify, encompass, or widen the scope of meaning. In rabbinic hermeneutics the word גם (*gam*), “also, too,” amplifies the literal meaning of a biblical word or phrase. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:14; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b.

10. **to conduct the episode toward His intention** That is, God posed the question to Satan in order to steer the conversation.

11. ***From roaming the land…*** In its simple sense, the verse reads: *From roaming the* ארץ (*arets*), *earth, and walking about upon it*; but Rabbi El’azar interprets *arets* as “land,” specifically the finest land, the land of Israel. Whereas all other lands of the world are controlled by foreign heavenly princes (“other sides”), the land of Israel is governed directly by God. Therefore, Satan does not dwell in the Holy Land; he can only roam there. From Satan’s response, God perceived that he intended to slander the people of Israel, so he steered him toward Job as a temporary substitute.

According to the Midrash, Satan accused Israel just as God was about to split the Red Sea for them. See *Shemot Rabbah* 21:7, which includes the complete parable of the shepherd: “[*YHVH said to Moses,*] *‘Why are you crying out to Me*? [*Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward!*]’ (Exodus 14:15).… Rabbi Ḥama son of Ḥanina said, ‘When Israel came out of Egypt, the angel Samael arose to accuse them.’ And Rabbi Ḥama son of Ḥanina explained this in the name of his father: ‘This can be compared to a shepherd who was bringing his sheep across a river. A wolf came to attack the sheep. The shepherd, who was experienced—what did he do? He took a large billy goat and gave it to the wolf, thinking, “Let him wrestle with this until we cross the river, and afterward I will bring it across.” Similarly when Israel came out of Egypt, the angel Samael arose to accuse them, saying before the blessed Holy One, “Master of the World! Until now they were

worshiping idols, and now You are splitting the sea for them?" What did the blessed Holy One do? He handed over to him Job, who was one of Pharaoh's advisers, of whom is written *a man blameless and upright* (Job 1:8); and He said to him, *Here, he is in your hand* (ibid. 2:6). The blessed Holy One thought, "While he occupies himself with Job, Israel will go through the sea, and afterward I will deliver Job."… Job said,… "He handed me over to Satan. In order that Israel would not emerge guilty in judgment, He wrung me out through his hand."… At that moment the blessed Holy One said to Moses, "Moses! Look, I have handed Job over to Satan. What should you do? *Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward!*"'"

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 57:4; *Zohar* 3:101b, 218a–b (*RM*). On the heavenly princes, see above, p. 19, n. 71; p. 21, n. 80. On their negative valence here ("other sides"), see Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 244, n. 92. On God's possession and control of the land of Israel, see *Tanḥuma, Re'eh* 8; BT *Ta'anit* 10a, *Ketubbot* 110b. The verse in Job 1:8 concludes: *For there is no one like him on earth, a man blameless and upright, revering God and shunning evil*.

12. ***Is it for nothing…*** The following verses (Job 1:10–11) read: *Have You not hedged him round—him and his household and all that he has? The work of his hands You have blessed, and his livestock has spread throughout the land. But stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face*.

13. **to this side is given a portion…** The demonic powers should be given a portion, occupying and assuaging them, so that they will not disturb Israel's intimacy with God.

According to Numbers 28:15, on each new moon a goat must be brought as a sin offering. Here, this goat is intended to preoccupy Satan, leaving Israel alone with God.

In the original ritual of Yom Kippur (Leviticus 16:7–10), one goat is sacrificed as a sin offering to God, while a

scapegoat bearing the sins of Israel is sent off into the wilderness for the demon Azazel. (Similarly in the Babylonian Akitu ritual, a goat—substituted for a human being—is offered to Ereshkigal, goddess of the Abyss.) According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46, the goat of Yom Kippur is intended to preoccupy Satan: "They gave him a bribe on Yom Kippur so that he would not nullify Israel's sacrifice."

On the theme of assuaging demonic powers, see *Sifra, Shemini* 1:3, 43c; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 16:8; Moses of Burgos, *Ammud ha-Semali*, 158–59; *Zohar* 1:11a, 64a, 65a, 113b–114b, 138b, 145b, 174b, 190a, 210b; 2:154b, 184b–185a, 237b–238a, 266b, 269a; 3:63a–b (*Piq*), 101b–102a, 202b–203a, 258b; *ZḤ* 20c (*MhN*), 87b–c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 165–67; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 124–27; idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 49; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:890–95.

See BT *Yoma* 20a: "On Yom Kippur, Satan has no permission to accuse. How do we know? Rami son of Ḥama said, 'השטן (*Hasatan*), Satan, equals 364 in numerical value—implying that on 364 days he has permission to accuse, while on Yom Kippur he does not.'"

On the new-moon offering, see also *Bereshit Rabbah* 6:3; BT *Ḥullin* 60b (quoted above, pp. 41–42, n. 180). The sixteenth-century kabbalists of Safed observed the day preceding the new moon as *Yom Kippur Qatan* ("Minor Day of Atonement").

14. **portion from the entire seed of Abraham…** According to a midrashic tradition, Job was Abraham's nephew, son of his brother Nahor. This is based on the fact that the name of Job's country, Uz (Job 1:1), is identical with the name of Nahor's firstborn son.

The phrase "on the other side" apparently refers to "the other side" of Abraham's family (the descendants of his brother Nahor), though it may also indicate the intended recipient of this portion: the demonic Other Side.

On Job as Abraham's nephew Uz, see JT *Sotah* 5:5, 20c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 57:4; *Tanḥuma, Shelaḥ* 14; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shelaḥ* 27; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 17:2. The passage in Genesis begins: *It happened after these things that Abraham was told*…These verses immediately follow the story of the binding of Isaac and are chanted along with it on the second day of Rosh Hashanah.

15. **claim against Abraham…** Once Abraham had bound Isaac upon the altar, he should not have substituted a ram for him (see Genesis 22:13), based on the law in Leviticus forbidding sacrificial substitution.

Similarly, Satan sought retribution for the kidnapping and selling of Joseph by his ten brothers, which was eventually punished through the martyrdom of ten rabbis during the Hadrianic persecution in the second century.

See *Heikhalot Rabbati* 5:5 (in *Battei Midrashot* 1:74): "The Attribute of Judgment stood before the blessed Holy One and said, 'Master of the World! You wrote in Your Torah: *One who steals a man and sells him*… [*shall surely be put to death*] (Exodus 21:16). Now, the sons of Israel [Jacob] who stole their brother Joseph and sold him, what has happened to them?' Immediately permission was granted to Samael to annihilate ten heroes in their place."

See *Midrash Mishlei* 1:13; *Elleh Ezkerah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:64); *ZḤ* 93b (*MhN, Eikhah*); *Zohar* 1:106a.

16. **blessed Holy One prepared this one…** God prepared Job as Satan's portion, since Job's cousin, Isaac, had escaped being sacrificed. On Job as Abraham's nephew (Isaac's cousin), see above, note 14.

"Another side" refers to Israel or to the realm of holiness. Note the playful use of סטרא אחרא (*sitra aḥara*), "other side, another side," which usually refers to the demonic realm. See the wording above, "to this side," at note 13; and note 14.

17. **Job was one of Pharaoh's closest advisers…** Just as he had advised Pharaoh to rob and enslave the Israelites

yet spare their lives, so he was deprived of all that he owned and was tormented but not killed.

The context in Job (2:4–6) reads: *Satan answered YHVH, saying,… "But stretch out Your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face." YHVH said to Satan, "Here, he is in your hand, but spare his life."*

On Job as Pharaoh's adviser, see BT *Sotah* 11a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:9; 21:7 (above, note 11); *Zohar* 2:69a. On his special status in Pharaoh's court, see JT *Sotah* 5:5, 20c. Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 9:20; *Shemot Rabbah* 12:2; *Zohar* 2:53a; below, note 40.

On the principle "As he judged, thereby was he punished" in the context of the Exodus, see *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 5, *Shirta* 4–6; BT *Sotah* 11a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:4–5; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:9.

18. ***But spare his soul… End of all flesh…*** The verse in Job reads: *YHVH said to Satan, "Here, he is in your hand, but spare* נפשו (*nafsho*), *his life."* Rabbi El'azar interprets *nafsho* as *his soul*, which is in the power of *Shekhinah*, not of Satan.

Satan is called *end of all flesh*, because he appears as the Angel of Death and consumes all mortal creatures. In the time of Noah, this demonic force came before God to denounce human corruption and seek authorization to destroy life. The verse in Genesis reads: *God said to Noah, "End of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. Here, I am about to destroy them, with the earth!"*

The demonic force derives from *Gevurah* on the left, identified with darkness, so Satan is the *end of darkness* mentioned in Job: *He puts an end to darkness; every extremity he explores—rock of pitch-black gloom*. (This section of Job [28:3–11] is traditionally understood as referring to God's penetration of the mysteries of nature, though its more likely referent is human mining operations in remote volcanic regions.) Here, the word תכלית (*takhlit*),

extremity (or *termination*), is interpreted by Rabbi El'azar as *extermination*, based on the root כלה (*klh*), "to destroy." He apparently reads the verse: *He* [i.e., God] *puts* [Satan as] *an end to darkness; every extermination* [or: *exterminating all*], *he* [i.e., Satan] *explores* [and seeks].

Whereas Satan, deriving from the left, is *end of all flesh*, *Shekhinah* represents a different end: the consummation of the divine flow, characterized by the grace of *Ḥesed* on the right. This positive end is alluded to in the verse from Daniel: *As for you, go on till the end; you will rest, and arise for your share* לקץ הימין (*le-qets ha-yamin*), *at the end of days*. The word ימין (*yamin*) is an aramaized form of the Hebrew ימים (*yamim*), "days," but here Rabbi Ḥiyya understands it as the Hebrew ימין (*yamin*), "right."

See *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:6; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 17:5; *Zohar* 1:54a–b, 62b–63a, 75a (*ST*), 152b, 193a, 210b; 2:134a–b, 181b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 73–75, 368–71; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 80–81 (102–3). On *end of all flesh*, see also *Zohar* 1:35b, 58a, 106a, 107a; cf. 3:170a. On the identification of Satan with the Angel of Death, see BT *Bava Batra* 16a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same."

19. ***You incited Me…*** The full verse reads: *YHVH said to Satan, "Have you noticed My servant Job? For there is no one like him on earth, a man blameless and upright, revering God and shunning evil. He still holds fast to his integrity, though you incited Me against him to destroy him without cause."* This seems to indicate that Job's suffering was undeserved and based solely on Satan's incitement. However, Rabbi El'azar insists that Job was punished deservedly for his cruel advice to Pharaoh, in accordance with the principle of divine justice conveyed to Job by his friend Elihu.

The preceding statement by Elihu (34:10) reads: *Far be it from God to do evil, from Shaddai to do wrong!*

20. ***You incited Me* בו (*bo*), *against him…in him…*** Rabbi El'azar reads the word *bo* hyperliterally as *in him*. Within Job's mind, it seemed that God was incited by Satan; but actually Job was properly judged. Later in the book, Job expresses his misconception that God is unduly influenced by evil forces: *Upon the plan of the wicked You beam*.

Similarly, although the verse in Psalms refers to God being deceived, in fact He was not: the supposed deception was merely imagined by the Israelites and claimed *with their mouths*.

21. **All is fine…** Rabbi Abba agrees that Job was punished justly, but he asks why Satan's accusations are believed in heaven. He explains that the evil impulse (identified with Satan) is *an old and foolish king*, seeking to dominate human beings ever since they were born; because he often seduces them to sin foolishly, his accusations are believed. The good impulse, in contrast, is a recent arrival—*a poor and wise child*—who enters the human being only at age thirteen.

See *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 16; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:13; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:5; *Zohar* 1:78a–b (*ST*), 110b (*MhN*), 179a–b. On the link between foolishness and sin, see Numbers 12:11; BT *Sotah* 3a.

See the description of Satan's actions in BT *Bava Batra* 16a: "He descends and seduces, ascends and arouses wrath, obtains authorization and seizes the soul." The same revision of this statement ("he ascends and accuses") appears in *Zohar* 1:190a; 2:196a. On the identification of the evil impulse with Satan, see above, end of note 18.

22. **judgment of an individual, but… judgment of the world…** For the judgment of an individual, God relies on Satan's accusations, but for judging the entire world, He insists on seeing for Himself.

On the interpretation of the verses in Genesis 6 and Job 28, see above, note 18. The full verse in Genesis 11 (referring to the Tower of Babel) reads: *YHVH came down to*

see the city and the tower that the human beings had built. The full verse in Genesis 18 (referring to Sodom and Gomorrah) reads: *I will go down and see whether as the outcry that has come to Me they have dealt destruction, and if not, I will know*.

23. ***One day…* as has been said** Namely, on Rosh Hashanah. See above at note 6.

The verse concludes: *and Satan also came among them*.

24. **two sides stand facing…** On this Day of Judgment, the side of life and the side of death confront each person. The virtuous, rooted in the side of life, are inscribed there; the wicked are inscribed on the side of death.

See BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "Three books are opened on Rosh Hashanah: one for the completely wicked, one for the completely righteous, and one for those between. The completely righteous are immediately inscribed and sealed for life. The completely wicked are immediately inscribed and sealed for death. Those in between remain pending from Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur. If they prove worthy, they are inscribed for life; if not, for death."

See *Zohar* 1:37a–b; 2:265a–b (*Heikh*); 3:100b; *ZḤ* 14b (*MhN*), 20C (*MhN*). The phrase "springs of life" derives from Proverbs 4:23.

25. **world rests in the middle…** See BT *Qiddushin* 40b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar son of Rabbi Shim'on: "Since the world is judged according to its majority, and an individual is judged according to his majority [of deeds, good or bad], if he performs a single *mitsvah*, happy is he for he has tipped the balance for himself and for the whole world to the side of merit! If he commits a single transgression, woe to him, for he has tipped the balance for himself and for the whole world to the side of guilt!"

See *Tosefta Qiddushin* 1:14; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 10:1; *Tanḥuma, Vayelekh* 2.

26. **one must not separate…** Making oneself conspicuous and thus vulnerable to accusation.

See BT *Berakhot* 49b, in the name of Samuel: "A person should never exclude himself from the entire community." Cf. ibid. 30a; and M *Avot* 2:4, in the name of Hillel: "Do not separate yourself from the community."

"The Shunammite" was a wealthy woman from the town of Shunem who fed and housed the prophet Elisha. She was rewarded with a son, who later died but was resuscitated by Elisha. See 2 Kings 4:8–36; *Zohar* 1:69b, 160b; 2:44b; *ZḤ* 77a (*MhN, Rut*); above, note 6.

27. ***Is it for nothing…*** The context (verses 9–11) reads: *Satan answered YHVH, saying, "Is it for nothing that Job reveres God? Have You not hedged him round—him and his household and all that he has? The work of his hands You have blessed, and his livestock has spread throughout the land. But stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face."*

28. **to demonstrate…** God sought to prove that Job's reverence was genuine, not based on ulterior motives.

See Galante. On the question of whether Job served God out of fear of punishment or out of pure love, see M *Sotah* 5:5.

29. **such awe is not proper** Because of its selfish motivation.

See *Zohar* 1:11b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 31.

30. ***In all this, Job did not sin…*** The simple sense of the verse is that in spite of all his suffering, Job did not complain against or blaspheme God. However, according to a midrashic reading, "*with his lips he did not sin*, but in his heart he did." The phrase "in everything" apparently refers to blasphemous statements uttered later by Job.

On the midrashic interpretation of Job 2:10, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:11; BT *Bava Batra* 16a; *Targum Yonatan* on the verse. On Job's blasphemy, see BT *Bava Batra* 16a.

31. **Although he did not stand firm…** Although he challenged God, he never abandoned faith.

32. **Twelve months…** The duration of Job's ordeal at the hands of Satan matched the duration of the suffering of the wicked in Satan's domain.

See M *Eduyyot* 2:10; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 3; *Zohar* 2:263a (*Heikh*).

33. **Rabbi Shim'on said…** Whereas Abraham bound Isaac on the altar as a sacrifice, Job did not offer anything on his own; rather, Satan deprived him of his children and livestock.

On the justness of Job's punishment, see above at note 17. On God arousing Satan toward Job, see above at note 11. The expression "his only son," referring to Isaac, derives from Genesis 22:2: *He said, "Take your son—your only one, whom you love, Isaac—and go forth to the land of Moriah and offer him up there as an ascent offering on one of the mountains that I will tell you of."*

This passage (until below at note 38) appears with some variation in *Zohar* 2:181b.

34. ***It happened at the end of days…*** The phrase מִקֵּץ יָמִים (*mi-qets yamim*) is usually taken to mean *in the course of time*, but here Rabbi Shim'on focuses on the literal meaning: *at the end of days*, which he understands as referring to the demonic power who brings *an end* to the *days* of every mortal creature. Cain's offering was not accepted because it derived from (or was intended for) the demonic realm, not from (or for) *Shekhinah*, who is known as קֵץ יָמִין (*qets yamin*), *the end of the right*—the consummation of the divine flow, characterized by the grace of the right side. Cain rejected *Shekhinah* in favor of the demonic power.

The phrase *qets yamin* derives from the verse in Daniel: *As for you, go on till the end; you will rest, and arise for your share* לְקֵץ הַיָּמִין (*le-qets ha-yamin*), *at the end of days*. The word יָמִין (*yamin*) is an aramaized form of the Hebrew יָמִים

(*yamim*), “days,” but here Rabbi Shim’on understands it as the Hebrew ימין (*yamin*), “right.”

See *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:6; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 17:5; *Zohar* 1:54a–b, 62b–63a, 233b; above, note 18. The verse in Genesis 4 concludes: *an offering to YHVH*.

35. ***And Abel, he too brought…*** The verse continues: *—from the firstlings of his flock and from their fat*.

“To amplify” renders לאסגאה (*le-asga’ah*), “to increase,” a Zoharic translation of the rabbinic Hebrew לרבות (*le-rabbot*), “to increase”—that is, to include, amplify, encompass, or widen the scope of meaning. In rabbinic hermeneutics the word גם (*gam*), “also, too,” amplifies the literal meaning of a biblical word or phrase. Here, the phrase *he too* implies that Abel’s offering encompassed “one with the other”: the essence was presented to God, while a portion was given to the Other Side. Cain, however, perpetrated the reverse, offering the essence to the Other Side and only a portion to God.

See *Zohar* 1:54b; 2:181b; above, note 9. On offering a portion to the Other Side, see above, note 13.

36. ***His sons used to hold a feast…*** The verses actually read: *His sons used to hold a feast, each in his house on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. When the days of feasting had run their course, Job would send and sanctify them, rising early and offering ascent offerings according to the number of them all. For Job thought, “Perhaps my children have sinned by blaspheming God in their hearts.” This Job did continually*.

37. **He never gave him a portion…** Job offered עולות (*olot*), *ascent offerings*, which, being totally consumed on the altar, provide nothing for the Other Side. If he had offered a portion to the demonic power, then Satan would have been assuaged; having been deprived of his portion, Satan attacked Job to exact retribution. Cf. *Zohar* 1:11a.

38. **if he had given him…** If Job had provided a portion to the Other Side, then Satan would have withdrawn from the realm of holiness.

39. **just as he separated…** Just as Job offered nothing to the demonic realm and treated good and evil in entirely separate ways, so he was given good and then evil, though finally he was restored to the good. The sequence of God's treatment of Job indicates how a person should proceed: learning what is good, then also what is evil, and culminating in the good.

On learning forbidden practices in order to know what is wrong about them and teach others accordingly, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 170.

40. **Job was one of Pharaoh's servants…** Before the plague of hail struck, *whoever feared the word of YHVH among Pharaoh's servants sheltered his slaves and his livestock indoors*. According to a midrashic reading based on verbal analogy, *whoever feared the word of YHVH among Pharaoh's servants* refers to Job, who *feared God* (Job 1:1).

See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 9:20; JT *Sotah* 5:5, 20c; *Shemot Rabbah* 12:2; *Zohar* 2:53a; above, note 17.

41. **mysteries cleaving above and below** Mysteries of the demonic powers, who are rooted in the divine realm and branch out below.

42. **wished to uproot all…** God wanted to eliminate Pharaoh and his cohorts on earth along with their corresponding demonic powers above, but the merit of Pharaoh's servant, Job, protected the Egyptian ruler. Once Job was weakened by sin and punishment, God vanquished Pharaoh.

On Job's protective power, see BT *Bava Batra* 15a. On his sins, see above at notes 17, 30.

43. **בא (*Bo*), *Come, to Pharaoh*…** In the normal idiom referring to physical movement, the verbal command would be לך (*Lekh*), *Go, to Pharaoh*. According to Rabbi Shim'on, the unusual instruction בא (*bo*), *come* (or *enter*), implies

that God guided Moses through the various chambers of the demonic realm to its highest rung, the great serpent, identified with Pharaoh and linked to the divine realm. God was telling Moses, "*Come to* the nexus of the demonic and the divine."

Moses feared the supreme demonic power and dared to approach only its lower aspects. When God saw this and realized that even angelic beings could not approach, He Himself confronted the serpent.

On Pharaoh and the serpent, see Exodus 7:9–13; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 3; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:4; above, pp. 105–7. The context in Ezekiel (29:3–4) reads: *Thus says* Adonai YHVH*: I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great sea serpent sprawling amidst his streams, who said, "My Nile is mine; I made it for myself." I will put hooks in your jaws and make the fish of your streams cling to your scales. I will haul you up from your streams, with all the fish of your streams clinging to your scales*.

The full verse in Exodus 10 reads: YHVH *said to Moses, "Come to Pharaoh, for I Myself have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, so that I may set these signs of Mine in his midst."*

The verse in Exodus 12 reads in full: *I will pass through the land of Egypt on this night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt from human to beast, and upon all the gods of Egypt I will render judgment—I,* YHVH. According to a midrashic reading in the Passover Haggadah, "*I will pass through the land of Egypt*—I and not an angel. *And I will strike down every firstborn*—I and not a seraph. *And upon all the gods of Egypt I will render judgment, I,* YHVH—I am He, and no other." See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 7; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 26:8.

On the phrase "chamber after chamber," cf. 3 Enoch 1:1; *Heikhalot Rabbati* 15:1 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:94); Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§ 1, 206. On the chambers of the Merkavah (the divine chariot-throne), see

Vayiqra Rabbah 16:4; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4; 1:10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 22. On the chambers of Leviathan (who is identified below as the demonic male), see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4. On Moses' fear of the serpent, see Exodus 4:3.

44. **The mystery... has been demonstrated...** The nature of the demonic realm and its connection with the divine realm is one of the most profound secrets and has been revealed only to those who delve deeply.

"Fathomers" renders מארי מדין (*marei middin*), "masters of *middin*," apparently deriving from מדד (*mdd*), "to measure." See Judges 5:10: *you who sit on middin*, where the word is variously rendered as "[extended, wide] carpets, blankets" or—based on דין (*din*), "judgment"—"the judgment seat." See BT *Eruvin* 54b: "It was taught in the school of Rav Anan: What is the meaning of the verse... *you who sit on middin*? —...you who render judgment in absolute truth."

In the *Zohar* the expression may refer to kabbalists who know the מדות (*middot*), the divine "qualities" (*sefirot*), or who know שעור קומה (*shi'ur qomah*), "the measure of the [divine] stature." See Schäfer, *Synapse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §952: "Whoever knows this שיעור (*shi'ur*), measure, of our Creator..., concealed from creatures, is assured of life in the world that is coming." See *Zohar* 1:133a, 241b; 2:71b, 130b, 161a; *ZḤ* 73b (*ShS*), 74b (*ShS*), 106b (*Tiq*).

On the select few who have probed the mysteries of the demonic realm and its relation to the divine realm, see below at note 53; Isaac ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Ma'amar al ha-Atsilut ha-Semalit*, 244; Moses of Burgos, *Ammud ha-Semali*, 147; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 15–17. Cf. Huss, "Ḥakham Adif mi-Navi," 117–18.

On the demonic sea serpent, see *Zohar* 1:52a; 2:27b–28a. On the mythical context of this entire passage (34a–35b) and its later Lurianic and Sabbatean developments, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:464–70; Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 297–325; Rubin, "Derush ha-Tanninim";

Liebes, *Sod ha-Emunah ha-Shabbeta'it*, 175–77; idem, "Mar'ish ha-Arets," 346–54; Fishbane, *Biblical Myth and Rabbinic Mythmaking*, 273–82.

45. **Leviathan and his mate…** Leviathan is the primordial sea monster who, together with his mate, threatened the world until they were vanquished by God. In the time to come, the righteous will feast at a banquet, and their main course will be Leviathan's female partner.

See BT *Bava Batra* 74b: "*God created the great sea serpents*…. Rabbi Yoḥanan said, 'This is *Leviathan the elusive snake* and *Leviathan the writhing snake*, as is said: *On that day YHVH will punish—with His fierce*, [*great, mighty*] *sword*—[*Leviathan the elusive snake, Leviathan the writhing snake*] (Isaiah 27:1).' Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav, 'Everything that the blessed Holy One created in His world, He created male and female. Even *Leviathan the elusive snake* and *Leviathan the writhing snake* He created male and female, and if they mated with one another, they would destroy the entire world. What did the blessed Holy One do? He castrated the male and killed the female, salting her for the righteous in the world to come, as is written: *He will slay the serpent of the sea* (ibid.).'"

As Rabbi Shim'on notes, in the verse in Genesis the word תנינם (*tanninim*), *sea serpents*, is spelled without the second י (*yod*), alluding to the fact that Leviathan was left without his female partner.

On Leviathan and his mate, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 1:21; Isaac ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Ma'amar al ha-Atsilut ha-Semalit*, 262–63; *Zohar* 1:34b, 46b; 2:108b; Idel, "Livyatan u-Vat Zugo." On the spelling of *tanninim*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 7:4; *Zohar* 2:176b (*SdTs*); *Minḥat Shai* on the verse.

46. ***The great sea serpent…*** Rabbi Shim'on begins to describe the demonic realm, comprising ten sea serpents swimming in ten rivers, corresponding to the divine realm of ten *sefirot*. The chief demonic power—*the great sea*

serpent—sprawls in nine rivers but returns again and again to the calm river, which is fed by the waters of *Shekhinah*, the Garden. Thus the demonic realm is nourished and sustained by the divine.

See the sources cited above at the end of note 44. The context in Ezekiel (29:3–4) reads: *Thus says Adonai YHVH: I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great sea serpent sprawling amidst his streams, who said, "My Nile is mine; I made it for myself." I will put hooks in your jaws and make the fish of your streams cling to your scales. I will haul you up from your streams, with all the fish of your streams clinging to your scales*. See above at note 43.

47. **entering the sea…** The serpent enters *Shekhinah*, feeding on various holy powers, and then returns to the calm river. See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 9.

48. **first river: Left side issues…** The demonic emanation begins to issue as drops trickling from the left side of the divine realm—*Din*, or *Gevurah*.

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:458–61. "Expanses" renders רקיעין (*reqi'in*), "firmaments, expanses," referring here either to demonic regions or to the firmaments of heaven.

49. **when that flowing stream…** The stream of *Yesod* issues drops of blessing from the right side (*Ḥesed*) that sustain the world; one of these drops falls into the calm demonic river.

50. **four rivers issuing from the Garden…** According to Genesis 2:10, *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*. In Kabbalah, this is understood to mean that the river of emanation waters the garden of *Shekhinah* and from there divides.

The following verses name the four rivers as Pishon, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates. Here, Pishon is identified with Babylon, perhaps based on their shared association with gold: the Pishon courses through a land *where there is gold*

(Genesis 2:11), and King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is described as *the head of gold* (Daniel 2:38).

Elsewhere, Pishon is identified with the Nile. See Samaritan Targum, *Midrash Aggadah*, Saadiah Gaon, Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and Naḥmanides on Genesis 2:11; *Zohar* 1:81b, 125a–b (*MhN*); 2:10a.

51. **head pierced with a hole…** This description is based on the blowhole of a whale. Here, the sea serpents breathe upward to inhale sustenance from above.

Cf. the description of the blowhole of a dolphin in Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim*, 7, 23a.

52. ***In the beginning God created…*** Both verses speak of God creating, which indicates a parallel between the ten divine utterances of Creation (symbolizing the ten *sefirot*) and the ten sea serpents (the demonic powers).

The number seventy may derive from the seven lower serpents, corresponding to the seven lower *sefirot*. Whereas the *sefirot* control and sustain the world, their demonic counterparts threaten to destroy it.

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:503. On seventy years, see *Zohar* 2:27b. Cf. Abraham ben Azriel, *Arugat ha-Bosem*, 2:195; below at note 65; *Zohar* 2:176b (*SdTs*).

According to M *Avot* 5:1, "The world was created through ten utterances." Only nine explicit commands appear in the opening chapter of Genesis, but the decade is completed by counting the phrase *In the beginning*.

See *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 31; B, 36; *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:1; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 32a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3 (and Luria's n. 73); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 506; *Zohar* 1:15a, 16b, 30a; 2:67a, 75b, 156b; 3:11b–12a.

53. **few know how…** Even among those who delve into the secrets of Creation, few understand the link between Creation and the demonic powers.

On Leviathan's fin(s), see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 17 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:28): "The entire world stands on one

fin of Leviathan."

See Apocalypse of Abraham, 21; *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:26); *Midrash Aseret ha-Dibberot* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:62); *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 9; Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, *Sodei Razayya*, 37; *Zohar* 1:30b; 2:108b; 3:279a (*RM*); Liebes, "Mar'ish ha-Arets," 347. Cf. *Pesiqta Rabbati*, add., 194b.

On the few who know, see above at note 44 and the references cited toward the end of that note. See BT *Sukkah* 45b, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "I have seen the sons of ascent [i.e., those privileged to ascend to heaven] and they are few. If there are a thousand, I and my son are among them; if there are a hundred, I and my son are among them; if there are two, they are I and my son."

See JT *Berakhot* 9:2, 13d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 35:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:15.

54. ***The earth was* תהו ובהו (*tohu va-vohu*), *waste and empty*...** The past tense (*was*) is understood as past perfect ("had been"), alluding to worlds that were created and destroyed before the present one. Lingering sparks from those worlds continued to shine, but when the serpent entered his river, he caused it to overflow, extinguishing the sparks.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:15: "Rabbi Ḥanin said, '... *The earth was*—it already had been [i.e., it preceded the creation of heaven].'" In the *Bahir* 2 (2), the midrashic interpretation of *was* is applied specifically to *tohu, waste*: the earth had originally been in a state of *tohu* and then changed to בהו (*bohu*), which is interpreted as בו הוא (*bo hu*), "in it is something," i.e., something with substance, as opposed to *tohu*.

The early kabbalists, drawing on Jewish Neoplatonism, understood *tohu* and *bohu* as referring respectively to primordial matter and form. *Tohu*, primordial matter, was seen as the root of evil (a Platonic notion developed in

Gnosticism and Neoplatonism), while *bohu*, form, was the origin of good.

See *Bahir* 9 (11), 109 (163); Abraham bar Ḥiyya, *Hegyon ha-Nefesh*, 2a; Isaac the Blind, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 2:6; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 1:11; 2:6; idem, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 89, 102–5; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 118–21; Naḥmanides on Genesis 1:2; *Zohar* 1:16a, 30a–b, 39b (*Heikh*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:460–64.

On the worlds that were previously destroyed, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:7: "Rabbi Yehudah son of Rabbi Simon said, 'It is not written *Let there be evening*, but rather *There was evening* [*and there was morning*] (Genesis 1:5). From here we know that a time-order existed before this [i.e., understanding the clause to mean *there already had been evening*].' Rabbi Abbahu said, 'From here we know that the blessed Holy One kept creating worlds and destroying them until He created these [i.e., heaven and earth]. Then He declared, "These please Me, those do not."'"

Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15. The theme of previous worlds that were destroyed appears elsewhere in the *Zohar* and inspired Isaac Luria's theory of "the breaking of the vessels." See *Zohar* 1:154b, 223b; 2:176b (*SdTs*); 3:61a–b, 128a (*IR*), 135a (*IR*), 142a (*IR*), 292a–b (*IZ*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:276–77, 289–90; 2:458–59; Liebes, "Ha-Mashiaḥ shel ha-Zohar," 219–21; idem, *Studies in the Zohar*, 134–35; idem, "Mar'ish ha-Arets," 352. On the link between the destroyed worlds and the demonic realm in the writings of Isaac ha-Kohen, see Scholem, "Qabbalot R. Ya'akov ve-R. Yitsḥaq," 193–97.

On the seventy years, see above at note 52. On the combined threat of the serpent and his mate, see above, note 45.

55. ***With darkness…*** The full verse reads: *The earth was waste and empty, with darkness over the abyss and the*

wind of God hovering over the face of the waters.

The demonic darkness and wind threatened until God crushed the head of the male serpent. Then another wind—a holy spirit—struck the demonic wind, and the process of Creation unfolded with the creation of light. (The word רוח [*ruaḥ*] means "wind, spirit, breath.") Cf. *Zohar* 1:86b–87a.

The phrase "not undulating below" may mean that the serpent did not occupy himself with the realm below, but with the realm above, trying to block the light from penetrating the abyss. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:504. For another interpretation, see *OY*.

56. **Radiance from above...** Divine light struck the demonic wind, and the serpent (or his darkening wind) withdrew. Then even the serpent was illumined, and a holy wind blew above. Light from the serpent reached the sun, whose luster attracted the wicked to idolize it. So God concealed the light, which was also empowering the serpent. However, the light did not totally disappear; rather, it was hidden as seed for *Yesod*, known as Righteous One. He is the divine gardener, sowing this seed of light in the Garden of *Shekhinah*.

On the light being concealed and sown, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:7: "Rabbi Yehudah son of Rabbi Simon said, 'With the light created by the blessed Holy One on the first day, one could gaze and see from one end of the universe to the other. When the Holy One foresaw the corruption of the generation of Enosh and the generation of the Flood, He hid it away from them, as is written: *The light of the wicked is withheld* (Job 38:15). Where did He hide it? In the Garden of Eden. *Light is sown for the righteous, joy for the upright in heart* (Psalms 97:11).'"

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:6; 41:3; BT *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:1; *Tanḥuma, Shemini*, 9; *Bahir* 97–98 (147); *Zohar* 1:7a, 31b–32a, 45b–46a, 47a, 59a, 131a, 203b; 2:127a, 148b–149a, 220a–b; 3:88a, 173b. On the generation of Enosh, see Vol. 3, p. 248, n. 408.

On the word אפותיה (*afuteih*), "his brow," see above, p. 67 and n. 296. Here, it apparently refers to the serpent's blowhole (see above, note 51). On the sun deriving radiance from above, see *Tanḥuma, Beha'alotekha* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beha'alotekha* 10. On worshiping the sun, see *Zohar* 2:188a. On Righteous One as a name of *Yesod*, see above, p. 78 and n. 30. On *Yesod* as gardener, see *Zohar* 2:166b–167a.

57. **he aroused the other side...** He aroused the second river issuing from the Garden, named Gihon (see above, note 50). Gihon is also the name of the spring providing water for Jerusalem, where Solomon was anointed. Here Rabbi Shim'on blends the two.

On the double sense of Gihon, see David Luria on *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 20, n. 30. The phrase "the other side" does not necessarily refer here to the demonic Other Side; see above, note 16. Cf. *OY*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:504.

"Another kingdom... that is strong" apparently refers to the fourth kingdom of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which is described as *strong as iron* (Daniel 2:40). Cf. above, note 50. According to *Haggahot Maharḥu*, "another kingdom" refers to the Messiah.

58. ***great sea serpent*** **aroused it...** Stimulated the Gihon.

59. **spreading over his head...** Over the serpent's head, blocking his access to the light above.

60. **sea serpent returned...** To the realm of darkness, separated from light by the thread. Here the nine other demonic rivers are confined, along with their subservient powers ("fish"). (Alternatively, "fish" symbolize both holy and demonic powers, now clearly separated from one another.) When holy waters separated from demonic waters, all the demonic rivers separated and entered the main, calm demonic river.

61. **All the fish breeding…** The various demonic powers within the rivers are called Nights and Firstborn of Egypt, overseeing other demonic powers (other fish and firstborn) who roam the world.

Apparently, these powers are designated Nights because of the demonic nature of darkness. Conceivably, לֵילוֹת (*leilot*), "nights," implies, or can be read as, לִילוֹת (*lilot*), a pseudo-plural of לִילִית (*lilit*), the demoness "Lilith." Cf. above, p. 107, n. 132.

The name Firstborn of Egypt derives from Psalms 135:8, referring to the victims of the tenth plague. See Exodus 11:5.

The designation פרישן (*perishan*), "separate," applied to the angels, reflects the medieval philosophical term נפרדים שכלים (*sekhalim nifradim*), "separate intelligences." In the philosophical context, "separate" refers to separation from matter; here, to the angels' separation from one another. Cf. the expression עלמא דפרודא (*alma de-feruda*), "world of separation" (*Zohar* 1:155a–b; 2:234a; 3:159b), which, while drawing on philosophical terminology, refers not to a realm separate from matter but rather to the material world, lacking unity and characterized by separation.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate water from water."*

62. ***Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants…*** The verse concludes: *fruit trees bearing fruit of each kind, having its seed within it upon the earth." And so it was*. The word עשב (*esev*), *plants*, means "plant, grass, herb."

63. **he dries up all these plants…** Holy powers operating in the world, or physical plants on earth. Then, a holy wind (or spirit; see above, note 55) strikes the demonic wind, and the plants grow back again and praise God.

According to the early mystical text *Pereq Shirah*, every created thing sings a biblical verse to God.

64. **beasts of various species…** Demonic powers.

65. **נחש בריח (*naḥash bariaḥ*)...** The full verse in Isaiah reads: *On that day YHVH will punish—with His fierce, great, mighty sword—Leviathan naḥash bariaḥ, the elusive snake, Leviathan the writhing snake; He will slay the serpent of the sea*. See Job 26:13.

Here Rabbi Shim'on associates בָּרִיחַ (*bariaḥ*), "elusive," with בְּרִיחַ (*beriaḥ*), "bar (on a door, gate, or prison)," alluding to the fact that this snake is shut in, emerging only once every fifty years to battle the sea serpent. The elusive, writhing demonic snake defeats the sea serpent, but only with God's help.

The link between the snake and *lights in the expanse of heaven* is based partly on the deficient spelling of מארת (*me'orot*), *lights* (see the following note), but also on the image of תלי (*teli*)—the constellation Draco ("Dragon"), extending more than halfway around the northern circumpolar sky. See Shabbetai Donnolo's description in *Sefer Ḥakhmoni*, on *Sefer Yetsirah* 6:1: "When God created the sky above us, divided into seven heavens, He created the *teli*, dragon, out of fire and water in the form of a great serpent, like a great, writhing snake. He gave it a head and a tail and placed it in the fourth heaven, the middle one, abode of the sun, and He stretched it from one end to the other like *beriaḥ*, a bar, like a writhing snake..., extended like a circular ring, and all the stars, luminaries, and constellations are attached to it. As threads of warp and woof are attached to a weaver's beam, so all the stars in the seven heavens above and below are attached to it." Later in the same passage, Donnolo identifies *teli*, "Draco," with *naḥash bariaḥ, the elusive snake*. As his source on the *teli*, he cites "the ancient books," which may well have inspired the *Zohar*'s reference here to "books of the ancients."

On the *teli*, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 6:1; *Zohar* 1:44a (*Heikh*), 125a; Gikatilla, *Sod ha-Naḥash u-Mishpato* (quoted in Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 79); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:607; Kaplan, *Sefer Yetzirah*,

231–39. On *bariaḥ*, "elusive," and *beriaḥ*, "bar," see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 9, and David Luria's n. 33; *Zohar* 3:42a (*RM*), 278b (*RM*); *TZ* 21, 43b. For other references to "books of the ancients," see *Zohar* 1:10a, 34b, 41a (*Heikh*), 180b, 184a, 220a, 234b; 2:95b, 239a; 3:10a, 19a, 26b, 249b, 258b, 288a (*IZ*).

לווטין (*Levatin*), "curses," is a play on לויתן (*livyatan*), "Leviathan," who is described as *the elusive… writhing snake* in the verse from Isaiah. On the snake who was cursed after seducing Eve to sin, see Genesis 3:14: *Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all beasts of the field*.

In the verse from Job, *Sea* refers to the god of the sea. The context in Ezekiel (29:3–4) reads: *Thus says Adonai YHVH: I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great sea serpent sprawling amidst his streams, who said, "My Nile is mine; I made it for myself." I will put hooks in your jaws and make the fish of your streams cling to your scales. I will haul you up from your streams, with all the fish of your streams clinging to your scales*.

66. **מארת (*me'erat*), curse…** Based on the deficient spelling of the word מארת (*me'orot*), *lights*, in the verse from Genesis, where it is written without *vav*s, the vowel letters. This deficient form is interpreted to mean that something was missing on the fourth day of Creation: the light of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) diminished, and Her union with *Tif'eret* (symbolized by *vav*) was disrupted. This lack creates the potential for evil or "curse": מארה (*me'erah*)—specifically the accursed snake. (The form מארת [*me'erat*] means "curse of," as in Proverbs 3:33.)

See JT *Ta'anit* 4:4, 68b; BT *Pesaḥim* 112b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:1; *Soferim* 17:4; Rashi on Genesis 1:14; *Zohar* 1:1a, 12a, 19b, 33b, 146a, 166a, 169a–b; 2:167b, 205a; 3:45a, 234a; *ZḤ* 69b–c (*ShS*); *Minḥat Shai* on Genesis 1:14.

The Tigris is the third of the four rivers issuing from Eden. See above, note 50.

67. **That snake is on dry land…** The accursed snake, growing in the dust and slithering on land, defeats the sea serpent who grows in the water.

The full verse from Genesis reads: *Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all beasts of the field. Upon your belly shall you go and dust shall you eat all the days of your life*. On מארת (*me'erat*), "curse," see the preceding note.

In the verse from Ezekiel, the sea serpent symbolizes Pharaoh (see above, end of note 65). On Pharaoh's arrogance, see *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 29: "Pharaoh possessed arrogance, and because of that he was uprooted from the world, as is said: *Pharaoh said, 'Who is YHVH*, [*that I should heed His voice to let Israel go*]?' (Exodus 5:2)."

68. ***YHVH will pass…*** The verse continues: *and when He sees the blood* [of the Paschal Lamb] *on the lintel and on the two doorposts, YHVH will pass over the entrance and will not allow the Destroyer to enter your houses to strike*.

69. **made a sign…** Why would God, who sees and knows all, require a sign to distinguish the doors of the Israelites from those of the Egyptians? And if the purpose of God's command concerning the blood was to demonstrate Israel's loyal obedience so that they would merit divine protection, then why was it applied outside and on three places: *on the lintel and on the two doorposts?*

On divine omniscience and the merit of fulfilling this *mitsvah*, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 7; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 12:13; Rashi on Exodus 12:13. On the question of whether the blood was applied inside or outside the house, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 6, 11; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 12:7; Rashi on Exodus 12:13; *NZ*. The verse in Daniel continues: *He knows what is in darkness, and light dwells with Him*.

70. ***YHVH saw…*** God does not manifest providence—rewarding virtue or punishing evil—until He witnesses

human action. The only exception to this rule is the case of idolatry, in which the seduction of the mind and idolatrous intention, even without any actual worship, constitutes a cardinal sin deserving of punishment. Therefore, in Egypt Israel had to apply the blood to the doors in order to stimulate divine providence.

On the principle of "Through arousal below, there is arousal above," see *Zohar* 1:35a, 77b–78a, 82b, 86b, 88a, 156b, 164a–b, 233a, 235a, 244a; 2:31b, 265a; 3:31b, 40b, 47b, 92a–b, 105a, 110b, 112b, 145a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 144. On the exception of idolatry, see BT *Qiddushin* 39b–40a. On providence, cf. Maimonides' view (*Guide of the Perplexed* 3:18): "Divine providence does not watch in an equal manner over all the individuals of the human species, but providence is graded as their human perfection is graded."

The verse in Deuteronomy 32 concludes: *from the vexation of His sons and His daughters*. The context in Genesis is the story of the Flood. The context in Deuteronomy 11 (16–17) reads: *Take care, lest your heart be seduced, so that you turn aside and serve other gods and bow down to them. Then the anger of YHVH will flare up against you, and He will shut the heavens so that there will be no rain and the earth will not yield her fruit, and you will perish quickly from off the good land that YHVH is giving you*.

71. **nethermost crowns below…** The various demonic powers.

72. **Why *a bundle of hyssop*?…** On its purifying power, see *Zohar* 2:41a (*Piq*), 80b.

The three places (the two doorposts and the lintel) correspond to the complete triad of *Ḥesed, Din*, and *Tif'eret*. *Ḥesed* and *Din* represent respectively the right and left sides; *Tif'eret* mediates between them. Cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 1:35–36; 17:3.

The blood was applied outside in order to ward off *the Destroyer*. The three dabs of blood may symbolize three

*yod*s, which constitute a divine name. See *Zohar* 2:41a (*Piq*); Scholem. Cf. *Zohar* 3:95a. For other interpretations of "the Holy Name," see Vital; Galante; *MmD*.

The subject of "he sees" may be God, as in the immediately preceding clause in Exodus 12:23: *when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts*. Or, the subject may be *the Destroyer*, who is frightened away by seeing the divine name on the door. Similarly, demonic powers are frightened away upon seeing the name שדי (*Shaddai*) on the mezuzah. See *Zohar* 3:76b, 266a; *ZḤ* 84d (*MhN, Rut*, citing Exodus 12:23); David ben Judah he-Ḥasid, *Mar'otha-Zove'ot*, 70; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 148.

73. **If so, why blood?...** If the purpose of the three dabs was to symbolize the sefirotic triad, why were all three blood, whose color symbolizes only *Din*, whereas *Ḥesed* is symbolized by white, and *Tif'eret* by the blended color green? On these three colors, see *Zohar* 1:18b, 98b–99a (*ST*), 136b; 3:215a.

74. **two bloods...** According to rabbinic tradition, the Israelites circumcised themselves before leaving Egypt.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 17:3: "By [the merit of] two bloods, Israel were redeemed from Egypt: by the blood of the Paschal Lamb and by the blood of circumcision, as is said: *I passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood, and I said to you, 'In your blood, live!' And I said to you, 'In your blood live!'* (Ezekiel 16:6)—by the blood of the Paschal Lamb and by the blood of circumcision." The midrashic interpretation is apparently based on the repetition of the exclamation *In your blood, live!*, though possibly on the plural בדמיך (*bedamayikh*), literally, "in your bloods."

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 5; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 12:13; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:6; 7:4; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:12; 5:2; *Rut Rabbah* 6:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29; *Shemot Rabbah* 19:5; *Zohar* 2:41a (*Piq*); 3:91b, 95a–b. Cf. Exodus 12:44, 48; Joshua 5:5.

Here the blood of circumcision is associated with the divine quality of Compassion. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 137b: “Were it not for the blood of the covenant [of circumcision], heaven and earth would not endure, as is said: *Were it not for My covenant day and night, I would not have established the laws of heaven and earth* (Jeremiah 33:25).” The blood of the Paschal Lamb is associated with Judgment because of the judgment executed upon the Egyptians.

75. **Not so!...** Rabbi Yehudah contends that there was only one type of blood. Although its color was red, symbolizing *Din* (Judgment), God transformed it into white, symbolizing Compassion and life. Thus the blood marking the two doorposts and the lintel symbolized the polar opposites of *Ḥesed* and *Din*, as well as the quality of *Tif’eret*, mediating between them and overcoming the harshness of *Din*.

The verse reads: *I passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood, and I said to you, “In your blood, live!” And I said to you, “In your blood live!”* See the preceding note.

76. **two crowns...** *Ḥesed* and *Din*, to manifest Love toward Israel and Judgment toward Egypt, respectively.

77. **One crown...** *Tif’eret*, blending the opposite qualities of *Ḥesed* (characterized by Compassion) and *Din* (Judgment).

78. **Write My name...** Included in the biblical passages contained in the mezuzah (Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21), or referring to the name שדי (*Shaddai*), written on the outside of the mezuzah’s parchment. See above, note 72.

On “My mystery of faith,” see the reference to “complete faith,” above at note 72 and the accompanying note.

79. **followed the pattern of the Holy Name...** Just as above, the divine name יהוה (*YHVH*)—which usually signifies Compassion—now manifested Judgment against the Egyptians, so below, Israel displayed blood, whose color symbolizes *Din* (Judgment).

On the principle "as above, so below," cf. the references in note 70 to the corresponding principle: "Through arousal below, there is arousal above." On the name *YHVH* as signifying Compassion, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:6.

80. **A person should not walk...** See BT *Bava Qamma* 60a–b: "Rabbi Yosef taught: 'What is the meaning of the verse *None of you shall go out from the entrance of his house until morning* (Exodus 12:22)? Once permission has been granted to the Destroyer, he does not distinguish between righteous and wicked.'... Our Rabbis taught: 'A plague in town? Keep your feet indoors.'... Our Rabbis taught: 'A plague in town? One should not walk in the middle of the road, because the Angel of Death walks there —for as soon as permission has been granted him, he strides brazenly.'"

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 11; *Devarim Rabbah* 4:4; *Zohar* 1:63a, 68a–b, 69a, 101b–102a, 107b, 108b, 113a, 182b, 197b, 204b; 2:196a, 227a; 3:38b, 54a–b; *ZḤ* 77a (*MhN, Rut*), 81c (*MhN, Rut*).

81. **By the very entity...** Upon seeing the blood, God executed judgment upon the Egyptians and compassionately protected Israel. Similarly, each of the *sefirot* above includes both Judgment and Compassion.

On the interplay and simultaneity of Judgment and Compassion, see *Zohar* 1:105b, 113b; 3:65a, 262b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 146, and Wolfson's n. 1. Cf. *Zohar* 2:63a.

82. ***YHVH will strike Egypt...*** According to the simple sense of the verse, both *striking* and *healing* pertain to Egypt, as is clear from the conclusion: *they will return to YHVH, and He will respond to their pleas and heal them*. However, Rabbi Ḥizkiyah applies *striking* to Egypt and *healing* to Israel; the latter were healed from the ordeal of circumcision (see above, note 74).

83. **At the moment that Holy Crown split…** At midnight, as *Shekhinah* was about to independently execute judgment upon the Egyptians, the divine loving Male joined Her, so that *striking* and *healing* would happen simultaneously.

חסד עלאה (*Ḥesed ila'ah*), "Supernal Love," is the *sefirah* of *Ḥesed*, part of the masculine configuration whose core is *Tif'eret*. For various interpretations of this passage, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*. On *Shekhinah* acting at midnight, see *Zohar* 2:37b.

84. ***will pass over the opening…*** Following Israel's ordeal of circumcision, God "passed over" and healed *the opening*—the site of circumcision. (See above at note 82.) Before circumcision, the foreskin obstructs holiness from a man's body and soul; once circumcised, he is open to holiness. However, *the opening* also alludes to *Shekhinah*, opening of the divine realm (or alternatively, to *Yesod*, the divine phallus and opening of the divine male body). Through Her (and through *Yesod*), the soul ("spirit") flows into the world; through the human male opening of the phallus, the human female is impregnated, generating a body.

When Abraham was circumcised, *he was sitting at the opening of the tent*—through this holy, transformative act, he attained *Shekhinah*.

In rabbinic literature the mark of circumcision is identified with the י (*yod*) of the divine name שדי (*Shaddai*), which is also the initial letter of יהוה (*YHVH*). See *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 14, *Shemini* 8; *Zohar* 1:13a, 56a, 60a, 89a, 93a, 95a–b; 2:87b, 216b; 3:13b, 142a (*IR*), 215b, 220a, 256a (*RM*), 266a; Wolfson, "Circumcision and the Divine Name"; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 29–48.

On the obstruction of the foreskin, see *Zohar* 1:93b, 95a, 98b. On *the opening of the tent*, see *Zohar* 1:98a–b, 103a–b; 3:14a. For various interpretations of this passage, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*. The full verse in

Genesis reads: *YHVH appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre, as he was sitting at the opening of the tent in the heat of the day*.

85. **through this revelation…** By circumcising himself and revealing the י (*yod*), Abraham united his *sefirah* of *Ḥesed* (Love) with *Shekhinah*, who is known as Righteousness. She is *the opening of the tent* and of the Tabernacle, and is also called simply *the tent*.

On the association of *yod* with *Ḥesed*, see *Zohar* 3:142a (*IR*). On *Shekhinah* as *opening of the tent*, see the preceding note.

86. **he was gladdened…** Abraham was informed that Sarah would give birth to a son. At the same time, he was blessed by attaining the realm of *Shekhinah* (*opening of the tent*), where he was sweetened by the influx of his *sefirah, Ḥesed* (Love), associated with the warm light of day.

On *heat of the day*, see *Zohar* 1:98a. For the full verse in Genesis 18, see above, end of note 84.

87. ***with everything…* tenth crown** According to a rabbinic interpretation, *YHVH blessed Abraham* בכל (*ba-kol*), *with everything*, alludes to Abraham's being blessed with a daughter, whose name was *ba-kol, with everything*. In Kabbalah this daughter is identified with the divine daughter, *Shekhinah*. *Shekhinah* is also the tenth crown, consummation of the ten *sefirot*. Having been circumcised, Abraham sat in Her presence.

On *ba-kol*, see BT *Bava Batra* 16b; *Bahir* 52 (78); Naḥmanides on Genesis 24:1; *Zohar* 1:219a. On *Shekhinah* as the tenth crown, see *Zohar* 3:14a, 148a.

88. כחום **(*Ke-ḥom*), *As the heat of…*** The simple sense of the word is *in the heat of (the day)*, but Rabbi Abba interprets the prefix כ (*ke*) according to an alternate sense: *as*. Now the verse yields a new meaning: Abraham *was sitting at the opening of the tent* (that is, in the realm of *Shekhinah*) *as* (in the same way that) he dwelled *in the heat of the day* (namely, in his warm *sefirah* of *Ḥesed* [Love]).

Shekhinah and *Ḥesed* interact with one another: *Shekhinah* transmits the warm light of *Ḥesed* below, and one cannot attain *Ḥesed* except by entering the opening of *Shekhinah*.

89. **He passed beyond the strict law…** Although normally the demonic powers (the lower "crowns") are linked with, and nourished by, the *sefirot* ("other crowns above"), now God detached them, thereby neutralizing them along with their earthly dependents, the Egyptians. See *Zohar* 2:37b, 40a, 53b.

"He passed beyond the strict law" renders עבר על שורי דדינא (*avar al shurei de-dina*), an Aramaic translation of a rabbinic idiom: עבר על שורת הדין (*avar al shurat ha-din*), literally, "he crossed the line of justice," meaning "he transgressed the letter of the law, acted unjustly." See *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 7; *Rut Rabbah* 2:12. For various interpretations of this passage, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

90. **He passed over His ways…** God overcame His compassionate nature in order to punish the Egyptians. Conversely, following the sin of the Golden Calf, God "passed over," or relinquished, His right to annihilate Israel and instead demonstrated compassion.

"He passed over His ways" renders עבר על אורחוי (*avar al orḥoi*), an Aramaic paraphrase of the rabbinic idiom מעביר על מדותיו (*ma'avir al middotav*), literally, "passes over his measures (or retaliations)," meaning "forgoes his right to retaliate." See BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 17a, *Yoma* 23a, *Ta'anit* 25b. Cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 18:6.

On the compassionate quality of *YHVH*, see above, note 79. The verse in Exodus reads: *YHVH passed before him and He called out: "YHVH, YHVH! A compassionate and gracious God…"*

91. ***It happened in the middle of the night*** The verse concludes: *that YHVH struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and every firstborn of the beasts.*

For a fine literary analysis of the following story, see Pachter, “Bein Lailah le-Voqer.”

92. **time of *minḥah* has arrived…** During the time of the afternoon prayer, known as *minḥah* (offering), the power of *Din* (Judgment) dominates.

See BT *Berakhot* 6b, in the name of Rav Huna: “One should always be זהיר (*zahir*), conscientious [or: careful], about the prayer of *minḥah*, since Elijah was answered only during this prayer.”

See *Zohar* 1:95b, 132b, 182b, 230a; 2:21a (*MhN*), 88b; 3:64b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 87. On Elijah being answered on Mount Carmel during the time of *minḥah*, see 1 Kings 18: 36–39.

93. **Why are you silent?** On Rabbi Yose’s silence, see BT *Shabbat* 33b, *Nazir* 50a; *Zohar* 2:17b (*MhN*). Cf. 1:115b; 2:4a, 217b. In 3:93b (in the standard printed editions, 2:32a), Rabbi Yose poses this same question to Rabbi Ḥiyya.

94. **world endures only because of the leaders…** See *Zohar* 2:47a, 198a; 3:114a, 135a (*IR*). Cf. *Tosefta Ta’anit* 2:5; BT *Eruvin* 41a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 42; *Zohar* 3:20b.

95. ***I saw all Israel…*** Here the prophet Micaiah recounts his vision to Ahab (king of Israel) and Ahab’s ally, Jehoshaphat (king of Judah), before their battle against the Arameans. Since at the time of this prophecy, the Israelites had not yet gone out to battle, Rabbi Ḥiyya questions the wording of the verse.

96. **If the head…is unworthy…** As was the case when King David conducted a census, which was considered a sin, and God then punished the people with a plague.

On the negative consequences of a census, see Exodus 30:12; Rashi and Ibn Ezra (long), ad loc. The full verse in Samuel reads: *When he saw the messenger who was striking down the people, David said to YHVH, “It is I who*

sinned, I who did wrong. And these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand fall upon me and my father's house."

97. **if the leader is seized...** As happened when King Ahab was killed in the battle; so the people could then return to their homes in peace.

The plural term *masters* includes King Jehoshaphat, who according to rabbinic tradition was ordained to die along with Ahab. His "crying out" in the thick of battle is interpreted as crying out to God, who consequently saved him.

On the divine decree against Jehoshaphat, see *Tanḥuma, Pinḥas* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pinḥas* 5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 21:6. On his crying out, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 348; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 17; Rashi on 1 Kings 22:32. The verse in Chronicles concludes: *and Jehoshaphat cried out and YHVH helped him, and God diverted them* [i.e., the chariot officers] *from him*.

98. **dusked** רמש (*Remash*), an apparently Zoharic verb based on רמשא (*ramsha*), "evening."

See *Zohar* 1:34b; 2:171a, 173a, 188a, 208a; 3:21a–b, 52a, 113b, 149a–b, 166b; *ZḤ* 7d (*MhN*), 25d (*MhN*), 28b (*MhN*).

99. **doe above and below...** The plural *does* in the verse from Psalms alludes to both the earthly creature and *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the doe and cries over Israel's exile.

According to the *Zohar*, at midnight God delights in the souls of the righteous in the Garden of Eden, and those on earth who engage in Torah at that moment partake of the celestial joy. Kabbalists are expected to rise at midnight and adorn *Shekhinah* with words of Torah in preparation for Her union with *Tif'eret*. This parallels the midnight vigil common among Christian monks from early medieval times. In *Zohar* 3:119a, Rabbi Yehudah alludes to the Christian practice: "I have seen something similar among the nations of the world."

On the midnight ritual of engaging in Torah, see BT *Berakhot* 3b: “Rabbi Shim’on the Ḥasid said, ‘There was a harp suspended above [King] David’s bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn.’” See Psalms 119:62.

See JT *Berakhot* 1:1, 2d; *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 3:3, 111b; *Aggadat Bereshit* 23:5; BT *Sanhedrin* 102a; 2 Enoch 8:3; *Seder Gan Eden* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:138); *Zohar* 1:10b, 72a, 77a–b, 82b, 92a–b, 136b, 178a, 206b–207b, 231b, 242b; 2:26b, 46a, 130a–b, 136a, 173b, 195b–196a; 3:13a, 21b–22b, 52b, 67b–68a, 193a; *ZḤ* 13b–c (*MhN*); Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 146–50; Hellner-Eshed, *Ve-Nahar Yotse me-Eden*, 149–76. Cf. Matthew 25:6.

On *Shekhinah* as doe, see *Zohar* 1:4a; 2:7b, 8b, 10a–b, 46a, 52b, 56b, 119b (*RM*), 219b; 3:21b, 25b, 68a, 249a–b. On the doe and Israel’s redemption, see below, p. 266, n. 236.

100. **whole Garden gathers…** All the souls of the righteous gather in the Garden, which symbolizes *Shekhinah*. Now She is united with Eden, a high sefirotic source, apparently *Ḥokhmah*.

The phrase “bundle of life” derives from 1 Samuel 25:29: *The soul of my lord will be bound in the bundle of life*. In the *Zohar* this *bundle* can refer to the celestial Garden of Eden or to *Shekhinah*, source and destination of all souls.

See *Zohar* 1:65b, 224b; 2:11a, 54a, 59a; 3:24b–25a, 70b, 71b, 92a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 123; *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 61 (75–76).

101. **all those weaklings behind the millstones…** Referred to in Exodus 11:5: *Every firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones, and every firstborn of the beasts*. “Those little lambs” are included in *every firstborn of the beasts*.

King Sennacherib of Assyria swept through Judah and threatened Jerusalem in 701 B.C.E. The full verse in 2 Kings reads: *That night an angel of YHVH went out and struck down one hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp. The people arose early in the morning and behold, they were all dead corpses!* On the stature of those who were struck down, see *Tosefta Sotah* 3:18; BT *Sanhedrin* 95b (quoting 2 Chronicles 32:21); *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah*, 29; *Shemot Rabbah* 18:5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:24.

Rabbi Yose's point is that in the defeat of Sennacherib a single divine messenger delivered a more powerful blow than did God Himself in the final plague in Egypt, where weaklings and defenseless animals were killed. On God acting alone in the tenth plague, see above, note 43.

"Royal officials" renders רופינוס (*rufinus*), which derives from the Latin *rufus*, "red-haired." The name Rufinus is shared by various early Christian saints, a fourth-century Roman minister, and Tineus Rufus, the second-century governor of Palestine ordered by Emperor Hadrian to crush the Jewish rebellion. In the *Zohar, rufinus* usually refers to a royal official. See 1:148b; 2:40a, 58b, 68a, 85a, 175a. For the medieval Castilian usage, see Corominas, *Diccionario*, s.v. *rufián*. Cf. Aramaic, רופילא (*rufila*), "high official."

"Commanders" renders פרדשקי (*pardashqei*). See *Bereshit Rabbah* 94:9; BT *Shabbat* 94a; *Megillah* 12b; *Zohar* 1:148b; 2:8b; 3:144b (*IR*); *Tosefot ha-Arukh ha-Shalem*, 336, s.v. *prdkhsh*.

102. **have heard nothing…and will not speak** Following the principle expressed by Rabbi Shim'on (in *Zohar* 1:5a): "I beg of you not to utter a word of Torah that you do not know and have not heard fittingly from a lofty tree [i.e., a recognized authority]."

See *Kallah Rabbati*, 2; *Zohar* 2:86b–87a, 151b, 153a; 3:76a–b, 207b; and BT *Berakhot* 27b, in the name of Rabbi Eli'ezer: "One who says something that he has not heard from his teacher causes *Shekhinah* to depart from Israel." This

conservative attitude contrasts with the *Zohar*'s frequent emphasis on innovation.

103. **privileged to all this…** To hearing a heavenly voice. See above at note 99.

104. **purifying the streets of Tiberias…** According to rabbinic sources, after emerging from thirteen years in a cave, Rabbi Shim'on and his son soaked their sore and sickly bodies in the mineral hot springs of Tiberias. In gratitude for being healed and rejuvenated, Rabbi Shim'on proceeded to purify the city, which was considered impure because it had been built by Herod Antipas on the site of obliterated tombs.

See JT *Shevi'it* 9:1, 38d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 79:6; BT *Shabbat* 33b–34a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:16; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 10:8; above, pp. 65–66, n. 291. On the specific reference to שוקי (*shuqei*), "streets" (or "markets"), see the last two sources; *Zohar* 3:72b; *ZḤ* 16a (*MhN*).

105. ***as nothing…*** לאפס (*Le-efes*). The verse actually reads מאפס (*me-efes*), which is often rendered *less than nothing*.

106. **their faith is *ke-ayin, like Nothingness…*** Rabbi Shim'on removes the apparent redundancy by explaining that the other nations think that their false belief is sublime—on the level of the highest *sefirah, Keter*, which is known as אין (*Ayin*), "Nothingness," the undifferentiated and incomprehensible divine no-thingness. They confront God with their false faith (setting it *before Him*), but He considers them and their belief *as nothing*—literally nothing.

For other interpretations, see *OḤ*; Vital; Galante; *Nefesh David*; *Sullam*; Pachter, "Bein Lailah le-Voqer," 325. For a similar interpretation of another biblical verse, see *Zohar* 1:10a. On *ayin*, see Matt, "*Ayin*: The Concept of Nothingness in Jewish Mysticism."

107. **את השמים (*Et ha-shamayim*), *The heavens…*** The verse famously opens with *In the beginning God created*.

Grammatically, the word את (*et*) is almost always an accusative particle with no clear independent sense. Yet already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. Here, according to Rabbi Shim'on, the first *et* alludes to *Ḥesed*, the divine right hand, and the second to *Gevurah*, the left hand. With His right hand, God created *the heavens* (symbolizing *Tif'eret*); with His left hand, *the earth* (symbolizing *Shekhinah*). See *Zohar* 2:83b.

Since the verse in Isaiah mentions both *hand* and *right hand*, it is assumed that *hand* denotes the left hand. See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 18; *Zohar* 1:30a; 2:20a (*MhN*), 83b, 85b. On *et*, see BT *Pesaḥim* 22b, *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Zohar* 1:247a; 2:81b.

108. **What does this mean: *they stand together?...*** According to the simple sense of the verse, *they* refers to *heaven* and *earth*, but Rabbi Shim'on insists that the subject is actually the divine right and left hands. His reasoning, apparently, is that *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *heaven* and *earth*) do not always *stand together*; in exile, they are separated from one another. However, *Ḥesed* (right) and *Gevurah* (left) do *stand together*, uniting in *Shekhinah*—the Divine Presence, who is constantly right here and known as זאת (*zot*), "this."

On *Shekhinah* as *zot*, see *Zohar* 1:49b, 72a, 93b, 176b, 200b, 228a; 2:12a, 37b, 39b, 50b–51a, 54b, 57a, 126b; 3:31a, 41a, 179b. On the concluding clause, "*et, ve-et* is included in *zot*," see *Nefesh David*.

109. **את הכל (*Et ha-kol*), *Everything...*** The word *et* alludes to both *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* (see above, note 107), both of which flow into *Shekhinah*, who includes all and is thus known as *everything*. When She rules at midnight (*in its time*), *Shekhinah* manifests Compassion (from *Ḥesed* on the right) toward Israel and Judgment (from *Gevurah* on the left) toward the other nations.

According to a rabbinic interpretation, *YHVH blessed Abraham* בכל (*ba-kol*), *with everything*, alludes to Abraham's being blessed with a daughter, whose name was *ba-kol, with everything*. In Kabbalah this daughter is identified with the divine daughter, *Shekhinah*.

See BT *Bava Batra* 16b; *Bahir* 52 (78); Naḥmanides on Genesis 24:1; *Zohar* 1:219a; 2:36a.

110. **word for which we came…** The questions raised by Rabbi Yose about the verse in Exodus. See above at note 101. Rabbi Ḥiyya realizes that Rabbi Shim'on has touched on this verse by explaining that *Shekhinah* manifests both Compassion and Judgment at midnight.

111. **He opened…** Rabbi Shim'on opened, describing how God ascends to be crowned in the highest *sefirah*—known as *Keter* (Crown)—and descends through all the *sefirot* to gaze upon heavenly and earthly beings.

The verses in Psalm 113 read: *Who is like YHVH our God, enthroned on high, looking far below upon heaven and earth?* See *Zohar* 1:195a. The verse in Psalm 14 concludes: *if there is one who is wise, who seeks God*.

112. **בחצי (*ba-ḥatsi*), *in the half of…*** The word חצי (*ḥatsi*) means "half" or "middle." Why doesn't the verse employ the form חצות (*ḥatsot*), which means unequivocally "middle"? Moses used this latter form when he predicted the tenth plague: *Thus says YHVH:* "כחצות (*Ka-ḥatsot*), *Around the middle of, the night, I am going out in the midst of Egypt*" (Exodus 11:4).

113. **So that Pharaoh's astrologers…** According to a rabbinic interpretation, Moses avoided the precise wording בחצות (*ba-ḥatsot*), *in the middle of* [*the night*], and instead used the approximation כחצות (*ka-ḥatsot*), *around the middle of* [*the night*], so that in case Pharaoh's astrologers miscalculated the precise moment of midnight, they would not accuse him of being a liar.

See BT *Berakhot* 4a (in the name of Rabbi Zeira); Rashi on Exodus 11:4.

114. **If so, the verse should read…** If Moses was trying to ensure that he would not be called a liar, then why did he put the approximation *ka-ḥatsot, around the middle of* [*the night*], in God's mouth—thereby suggesting that God could not bring the tenth plague precisely at midnight?

See BT *Berakhot* 3b. For the verse, see above, note 112.

115. **Secondly, look…** There is a discrepancy between Moses' prediction of the plague and the description of whom the plague actually killed. His prediction (Exodus 11:5) reads: *Every firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones*. The description of how the plague happened (12:29) reads:… *from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon*.

116. ***ka-ḥatsot, around the middle of,… ba-ḥatsi, in the half of…*** Why the switch? See above, note 112.

117. **your question…** The questions originally posed by Rabbi Yose to Rabbi Ḥiyya, which Rabbi Shim'on has supernaturally divined.

See above at note 101; Pachter, "Bein Lailah le-Voqer," 333–35. "Reapers of the Field" refers to the Companions who harvest secrets of Torah sprouting in the field of *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:156a (*ST*), 216a; 2:79b, 85b, 240b, 258a (*Heikh*); 3:106a, 127b (*IR*), 141b (*IR*), 143a (*IR*), 144a (*IR*), 214b, 297a; *ZḤ* 85d (*MhN, Rut*); *OY*; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 175–76, n. 99. On *Shekhinah* as field, see below, note 172.

The "Faithful Prophet" is Moses, who is known as Faithful Shepherd. See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 6; *Sifrei Zuta* 27; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; *Ester Rabbah* 7:13; *Rut Rabbah, Petiḥta* 5. See *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 7.

118. **Moses, of whom is written…** The verses read: *You are the fairest of humans; grace is poured upon your lips, because God has blessed you forever. You love*

righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with oil of joy beyond your companions.

The first of these two verses is applied to Moses in *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 17.

119. ***mi-benei adam, of the children of Adam…*** The simple sense of the phrase is *of humans*, but Rabbi Shim'on (adopting a midrashic reading) interprets it as *of the children of Adam*, referring specifically to Seth and Enoch, the highly virtuous descendants of Adam. (Later generations are referred to as Children of Noah.)

See *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Lekh Lekha* 22. On Adam's son Seth, see Genesis 4:25; 5:3; Vol. 1, p. 317, n. 1551. On Enoch, see Genesis 5:24; Vol. 1, p. 320, n. 1573; Vol. 3, p. 342, n. 222.

120. **חן (*Ḥen*), *Grace*… נח (*Noaḥ*), Noah…** Anagrams of each other. See Genesis 6:8: ונח (*Ve-Noaḥ*), *And Noah, found* חן (*ḥen*), *favor* [or: *grace*], *in the eyes of YHVH*.

121. ***Because God… has anointed you…*** This verse is applied to Abraham in *Bereshit Rabbah* 39:6; 49:4; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 10:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 16:4.

122. ***With oil of joy*—than Jacob** Apparently alluding to Genesis 28:18, describing Jacob's action upon awaking from his dream-vision: *Jacob rose early in the morning and took the stone he had placed at his head, and he set it as a pillar and poured oil over its top*. See ibid. 35:14.

123. **would a man who ascended…** Moses attained the highest rungs; surely he intended something profound when he said כחצות (*ka-ḥatsot*)—normally understood as *around the middle of* [*the night*].

Rabbi Shim'on prefaces his explanation of *ka-ḥatsot* by describing the relationship between *Shekhinah* and the divine male. *Shekhinah*, known by the feminine pronoun זאת (*zot*), *this* (see above, note 108), is the divine *woman*, emanating from the divine *man* (*Yesod* or *Tif'eret*), who is known by the masculine form זה (*zeh*), *this*.

The quotation from Genesis 2 is part of Adam's exclamation upon the creation of Eve: *This one at last, bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh! This shall be called Woman, for from man was this taken*. See *Zohar* 1:49b; 2:11b–12a; 3:48b, 145b, 174a. On *zeh* and *zot*, see *Zohar* 1:93b; 2:39b, 50b; 3:31a, 250a. On Moses as the divine *man* and his intimacy with *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 74 and n. 17.

124. **palm tree—male and female…** Palm trees are dioecious: male and female flowers grow on separate trees. Male flowers produce pollen, while female flowers develop into fruit. As early as 2300 B.C.E., Mesopotamian farmers had learned to hang a male flower in a female tree to enhance pollination.

Here Rabbi Shim'on's point is that *Shekhinah* is called "palm tree" because She and Her male partner are interdependent, becoming fruitful only by joining together.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 40(41):1; *Midrash Tehillim* 92:11; BT *Pesaḥim* 56a; *Bahir* 117 (172), 139 (198), and Scholem's note ad loc.; Rashi on *Pesaḥim* 56a, s.v. *Rav Aḥa*; *Tosafot* on *Menaḥot* 71a, s.v. *markivin*; *Zohar* 1:82a; 2:126a; 3:16a, 135b (*IR*), 143b (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 128.

125. ***Tamar…*תימרות (*timerot*), *columns of…*** *Shekhinah*, symbolized by תמר (*tamar*), "a palm tree," is likewise symbolized by תימרות (*timerot*), *columns of* [*smoke*], because at (or as) midnight She manifests both the white of Compassion and the black of Judgment.

See above at note 109. The verse in Song of Songs reads: *Who is this rising from the wilderness like columns of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?* See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah*, ad loc.; Zohar 1:10b, 176b; 2:84a, 117a (*RM*).

126. **Until this night is divided…** *Shekhinah*, symbolized by night, is not fully empowered until midnight.

The context in Genesis is a battle between four kings and five Canaanite vassal kings, who are aided by Abraham.

The literal meaning of the verse is *He divided himself* [i.e., his forces] *against them by night*; but Rabbi Shim'on interprets it as *Night was divided against them*—at midnight, *Shekhinah* executed judgment upon Abraham's enemies. See *Zohar* 1:92b, 112b.

127. **כתצות (*ka-ḥatsot*)... *when (the night) is divided*...** Understanding the word not in a nominal sense, meaning *around the middle of*, but rather as an infinitive construct: *when (the night) is divided*. Similarly, the verses in Kings and Job employ an infinitive construct.

See Rashi, Rashbam, and Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 11:4.

128. **in the second half...** Beginning at midnight, when *Shekhinah* is fully empowered. Thus Rabbi Shim'on explains the difference between Moses' prediction—כחצות (*ka-ḥatsot*), *when* [*the night*] *is divided*—and the description of the actual plague, which happened בחצי (*ba-ḥatsi*), *in the* [second] *half of, the night*.

See above at note 116; Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 11:4; 12:29.

129. **when the blessed Holy One arouses...** At midnight in the Garden of *Shekhinah*. The souls of the righteous constitute a midnight offering to God, whereas at other times, sacrifices are brought.

On the midnight arousal, see above, note 99. On the souls of the righteous being offered by the archangel Michael (the celestial high priest), see *Araqim*, in *Otsar Midrashim*, ed. Eisenstein, 1:70a (cf. *Otsar Midrashim*, 1:104a; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 5:63); *Tosafot* on *Menaḥot* 110a, s.v. *u-Mikhael*; *Zohar* 1:80a (*ST*), 81a (*ST*); 2:247a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*), 24b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 137; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 114–16. Cf. *Zohar* 2:119b (*RM*), 213b; 3:29b (*RM*).

On the verse from Song of Songs as alluding to sacrifices, see *Seder Olam Rabbah* 7; JT *Megillah* 1:11, 72c;

Bereshit Rabbah 22:5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 9:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:12 (on 1:2); *Zohar* 3:11a.

130. **ויהוה (*Va-YHVH*), *And YHVH*—He and His court…** The verse reads: *It happened in the middle of the night* ויהוה (*va-YHVH*), *and YHVH* [or: *that YHVH*], *struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt*.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 51:2, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Wherever it is said *And YHVH*, this implies: He and His court." In Kabbalah this court symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who derives from *Din* (Judgment) and pronounces the divine decree, so the phrase *And YHVH* encompasses "He [the divine male, known as *YHVH*] and His court [*Shekhinah*]."

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 21; *Shemot Rabbah* 12:4; Rashi on Exodus 12:29; *Zohar* 1:15b, 64b, 105a, 107b, 159b, 192b, 198a, 240a; 2:46a, 227b; 3:149a. The hermeneutical significance of *and* was championed by Rabbi Akiva. See BT *Yevamot* 68b, *Sanhedrin* 51b.

131. ***Struck*—Moses said, rather, *will die*…** Rabbi Shim'on expounds upon the seemingly slight difference between Moses' prediction of the tenth plague (*Every firstborn in the land of Egypt will die*) and the description in the following chapter (*YHVH struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt*). Why the specific verb הכה (*hikkah*), *struck*? This alludes to *Shekhinah*, who is known as כה (*koh*), "now, thus." She was aroused at this moment to strike the Egyptian firstborn, just as Moses had hinted to Pharaoh by using the name *koh*, thereby intending: "You will not listen until *Shekhinah* appears and strikes your firstborn."

Moses' declaration to Pharaoh in Exodus 7 (immediately before the first plague) reads: *YHVH, God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness." And look, you have not listened until now*.

132. **Pharaoh… perceived…** He understood that *Shekhinah* would bring destruction upon him and his land, as Moses had predicted by mentioning Her name זאת (*zot*), *this*. Yet Pharaoh stubbornly refused to consider Her. See above, note 108; *Zohar* 3:41a.

In rabbinic hermeneutics the word גם (*gam*), *too* (or *also*) amplifies the literal meaning of a biblical word or phrase. See JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:14. Here, it emphasizes the divine significance of *zot, this*, and the harsh punishment that *Shekhinah* is about to bring upon Pharaoh and Egypt.

On Pharaoh's expertise in sorcery, see *Zohar* 1:195a; 2:28a, 52b.

133. ***Every firstborn*—even high and low rungs…** Not only the earthly firstborn were attacked; even the various demonic powers conveying wisdom of sorcery throughout Egypt were torn from their links with the divine realm.

See above at note 89; *Zohar* 2:40a, 53b, 56b. Cf. *Zohar* 2:49a.

134. **Gist of the word** סתמא דמלה (*Setama de-millah*). In rabbinic usage, סתמא דמילתא (*setama de-milta*)—literally, "a matter without qualification"—means "the usual practice, as a general rule." In the *Zohar, setama de-millah* (or *de-millin*) can mean "unspecified wording" or "gist of the matter (or of the word)." See *Zohar* 1:30b, 50a; below, note 147.

135. **low crown of regal adornment of supernal Kingship** *The firstborn of Pharaoh* symbolizes the highest of the "low crowns," the demonic forces who derive their power from *Shekhinah*, or *Malkhut* (Kingship). Elsewhere in the *Zohar* the demonic powers are described as "dregs of [divine] gold."

"Regal adornment" renders קוזמיטא (*qozmita*), similar to rabbinic loanwords deriving from Greek *kosmion* or *kosmarion*, "adornment." Cf. the basic forms *kosmeo*, "to

order, arrange, rule, adorn," and *kosmos*, "order, ornament, ruler, universe."

See JT *Yevamot* 13:2, 13c; *Nedarim* 4:1, 38c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:10: "קוזמירין (*qozmirin*) [or: קוזמידין (*qozmidin*)], ornaments [or: jewels]" (and Theodor's note); *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 13: "קוזמין (*qozmin*), ornaments, of the king" (and Luria's note); *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 69: "קוזמירון (*qozmiron*), ornament" (and n. 1, quoting Isaac Arama, *Aqedat Yitsḥaq*, 63, which copies this midrash and reads קוזמיטין [*qozmitin*], which matches the *Zohar*'s form). See *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *qzm, qozmarya*.

In the *Zohar, qozmita* can mean "ornament" or "ruler." See 2:5a (*MhN*), 56b; *ZḤ* 2a; *OY*; Galante; *DE*; *NO*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David* , s.v. *qozmita*; Scholem.

136. **left crown, below regal adornment...** Whereas *the firstborn of Pharaoh* symbolizes the highest demonic power, *the firstborn of the slave girl* symbolizes a low one, situated *behind the millstones*—outside the four camps of angels attending *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 2:56b.

On the phrase *behind the millstones*, see *Zohar* 1:48a, 118a, 177a, 223b; 2:28a, 80a, 191b.

137. **lowest of the low...** The lowest demonic forces, passively receiving from those above them and associated with animals. They empower both male and female sorcerers.

Here Rabbi Shim'on answers Rabbi Yose's question (above at note 101) as to why the supposed "weaklings behind the millstones and those little lambs" died. In fact, these were dangerous demonic forces.

On the demonic nature of the donkey, see *Zohar* 1:166b, 172b; 2:6a, 64b–65a; 3:86b, 207a.

138. ***firstborn of the captive... those issuing from the slave girl...*** The particular demonic forces known as *firstborn of the captive* issued from the demonic *slave girl*. By drawing on the power of these *firstborn of the captive*,

the Egyptians were able to enslave their own captives forever.

See above, p. 90 at n. 72. Here Rabbi Shim'on explains the apparent discrepancy between Moses' prediction of the victims of the plague—*to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones* (Exodus 11:5)—and the description of whom the plague actually affected: *to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon* (12:29). See above at note 115. In fact, the latter issued from the former.

139. **Egyptians refused...** To let the Israelites leave, since they were confident that through the demonic powers they had enslaved them forever. God, however, untied the sorcerous bonds and smashed the demonic powers to liberate His people. Therefore the memory of the Exodus endures forever, recalled and celebrated frequently in the Bible and the liturgy.

On untying bonds or knots, see Daniel 5:12.

140. **Cluster of chiding...** In a bunch of verses God declares how He gloriously brought Israel out of Egypt, as if He is chiding Israel: "Look how much I have done for you!"

Cf. *ZḤ* 31a. "Cluster" renders קיטפא (*qitpa*), which in the *Zohar* means "cluster" and "resin." See *Zohar* 1:17b, 92b; 2:49b; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 189–191; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qitpoi, qitpin*.

141. **ten crowns below...** The ten demonic powers, corresponding to the ten *sefirot*, are all contained in the three groups of Egyptian firstborn mentioned in Exodus 11:5: *the firstborn of Pharaoh... the firstborn of the slave girl... and every firstborn of the beasts*. See above at notes 134–38; Zohar 1:166b; 2:40b.

The Egyptians bound Israel by three knots, corresponding to the three divisions: priests, Levites, and Israel—symbolizing the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*.

142. **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...** Symbolizing *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. Through the merit of their faithful virtue,

the demonic knots were undone and Israel was redeemed.

143. **All festive seasons, holidays…** The liberation from Egypt is the foundation of Jewish peoplehood, identity, and observance—which explains why it is mentioned so frequently in the Torah and why the Ten Commandments open with God's declaration *I am YHVH your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt* (Exodus 20:2). See above at note 140.

The phrase "in memory of the Exodus from Egypt" appears in the *Qiddush* (sanctification) recited at the beginning of each Sabbath and festival. According to Exodus 12:2, the Jewish calendar begins with the month of the Exodus: *This month is for you head of months, it is the first for you of the months of the year*.

144. **why did it not occur by day…** As Rabbi Yose had asked (above at note 101): "Why didn't this happen during the day, so that the miracle would be publicized?" Rabbi Shim'on first quotes two verses, one of which specifies *today* and the other *night*; then he explains that *night* (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) essentially liberated Israel, whereas day (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) brought them out brazenly, publicizing the miracle.

See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 134. On the question of the timing of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, see BT *Berakhot* 4b, 9a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 48. The phrase ביד רמה (*be-yad ramah*), *with a high hand* (Exodus 14:8; Numbers 33:3) is rendered by *Targum Onqelos* ברישׁ גלי (*be-reish gelei*), "with an uncovered head," i.e., defiantly, brazenly. See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:8; and *Shemot Rabbah* 18:10, where God says to Pharaoh: "You will not send My children out by night; rather, they will go forth בראש גלוי (*be-rosh galui*), brazenly, in the middle of the day!"

145. **Higher and lower engravings…** The various spiritual forces are uplifted and nourished by virtue of Rabbi Shim'on.

On the image of "Jerusalem above," see *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 1: "There is a Jerusalem above aligned with Jerusalem below. Out of His love for the one below, He fashioned another above…. He has sworn that His presence will not enter the heavenly Jerusalem until the earthly Jerusalem is rebuilt."

In the *Zohar*, Jerusalem above symbolizes *Shekhinah*. Through his wisdom and power, Rabbi Shim'on protects and grants access to Her.

On heavenly Jerusalem, see Revelation 21:2; *Targum Yonatan*, Psalms 122:3; BT *Ta'anit* 5a; *Zohar* 1:1b, 80b–81a (*ST*), 114a (*MhN*), 129a, 183b, 231a; 2:29b, 51a; 3:15b, 68b, 147b. On its walls, see *Zohar* 3:292a (*IZ*).

146. ***presence of the Lord YHVH*—this is Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai…** His divine status commands the respect of even the mightiest. This divinization of Rabbi Shim'on appears extreme but is not totally unprecedented.

See *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Yitro*) 1: "Whoever welcomes [literally, receives the face of] the wise, it is as if he welcomes *Shekhinah*." See JT *Eruvin* 5:1, 22b: "Rabbi Shemu'el said in the name of Rabbi Zeira, '… Whoever receives the face of his teacher, it is as if he receives the face of *Shekhinah*.'… Rabbi Yishma'el taught,… 'One who receives the face of his friend, it is as if he receives the face of *Shekhinah*.'"

The *Zohar* transforms the rabbinic simile into an actual description of the *Ḥavrayya* (Companions), who "are called the face of *Shekhinah* because *Shekhinah* is hidden within them. She is concealed, they are revealed" (*Zohar* 2:163b). See Vol. 1, pp. 59–60, n. 438.

On the divine name referring to certain outstanding humans, see JT *Bikkurim* 3:3, 65d; JT *Eruvin* 5:1, 22b; BT *Bava Batra* 75b; Vol. 3, p. 419, n. 578. On Rabbi Shim'on's divine status, see *Zohar* 1:218b, 223a; 3:79b; Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*; *NZ*; Pachter, "Bein Lailah le-Voqer," 339. Cf. above, toward the end of note 53.

On the phrase “male of males,” cf. above at note 137: “female of females,” describing the lowest demonic powers. The full verse in Exodus reads: *Three times a year all your males shall appear in the presence of* [literally, *the face of*] *the Lord YHVH, God of Israel*.

147. ***every firstborn*, unspecified...** The verse begins with the general wording *every firstborn* in order to include “all,” that is, both the demonic powers above (known as *firstborn*) and the earthly *firstborn*. The Egyptian *firstborn* who died were sorcerers, binding Israel by drawing on the power of the various levels of the “low” demonic crowns. See above at notes 134–38.

148. **whole land of Egypt was full of sorcery...** Every house contained a firstborn sorcerer who was now killed in the final plague, as *Shekhinah* (known as Night) executed judgment.

149. **fierce day in Tammuz...** In the heat of summer.

On the sun shining during the night of the Exodus, see *Zohar* 3:181b; *NZ*. Cf. *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), pp. 43–44 and nn. 18, 1.

150. **When they came out...** When the Egyptians came out of their houses, they found their firstborn dead in the streets.

On the Egyptians burying their firstborn as the Israelites left brazenly, see Numbers 33:3–4.

151. ***It is* ליל שמורים (*leil shimmurim*)...** Rabbi Shim’on wonders why the phrase ליל שמורים (*leil shimmurim*), *a night of watches*, combines the singular *leil, a night of*, with the plural *shimmurim, watches*, rather than with the singular *shimmur*, “watch,” which would be more logical (“inferable”). Further, why the switch from one form of the word night—*leil* (meaning *night of* or, as will be seen shortly, simply “night”)—to another: *lailah*?

The verse concludes: *for all the Children of Israel throughout their generations*.

152. **נערה (*na'arah*), *a girl*... spelled נער (*na'ara*)...** In the Masoretic text the word is spelled without the final ה (*he*), which Rabbi Shim'on takes to mean that the female is incomplete until she is united with the male. Similarly, the appearance of the word ליל (*leil*), *night of*—instead of לילה (*lailah*), *night*, with a final ה (*he*)—indicates that *Shekhinah* had not yet joined with Her male partner, *Tif'eret*. The first occurrence of the plural שמורים (*shimmurim*) hints at the imminent union of the divine couple, which is then signaled by the fully spelled לילה (*lailah*), *night*.

On נער (*na'ara*) and נערה (*na'arah*), see BT *Ketubbot* 40b; *Zohar* 1:51a; 3:156b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 115; *Minḥat Shai* on Deuteronomy 22:19. On ליל (*leil*) and לילה (*lailah*), see *Zohar* 2:131a; 3:22a.

153. **praise belongs only to the male...** Consequently, at the Red Sea, Israel glorified the male divine potency, *Yesod*, who is known by the masculine pronoun זה (*zeh*), *this*, rather than *Shekhinah*, who is known by the feminine pronoun זאת (*zot*), *this*.

In the verse from Micah the Exodus serves as a paradigm for Israel's future restoration and salvation. On this theme, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 8; *Tanḥuma, Eqev* 7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 17; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:11.

On the dominance of the male, see *Zohar* 2:39b; 3:183b. On *Shekhinah* as *zot*, see above, note 108.

154. **Just as here... so He intends to do...** Just as in the Exodus, *Shekhinah* appeared first as *leil, night of* (not yet united with Her spouse), and then as *lailah, night* (in union), so in the final redemption. Just as during the Exodus, "watching" is mentioned together with both *leil* and *lailah—leil, a night of, watches... this ha-lailah, night, is YHVH's, watches*—so in the final redemption: *Watchman, what mi-lailah, of the night? Watchman, what mi-leil, of the night?*

The verse from Isaiah is understood as conveying Israel's anguished cry from exile to the divine watchman: "*What of the night?* When will this dark exile come to an

end?” See JT *Ta’anit* 1:1, 64a; BT *Sanhedrin* 94a; Rashi on Isaiah 21:11; *Zohar* 1:144a; 2:130b.

155. ***Lailah, Night*, is named alongside the male…** Her full name—לילה (*lailah*), *night*—symbolizing Her union with her masculine partner, appears along with the word *morning*, associated with the light of *Ḥesed*, the masculine right arm.

The verse in Genesis links *morning* with Abraham, since his *sefirah* is *Ḥesed*. The verse in Psalms indicates that through *Ḥesed* God responds to human prayer. See *Zohar* 1:182b, 189a, 203a, 247b; 3:36a, 64b, 204a (linking both verses), 233a, 242a.

156. **Law of the Priests** This term applies to the book of Leviticus and also to *Sifra*, a Tannaitic midrash on Leviticus produced by the school of Rabbi Akiva, Rabbi Shim’on’s teacher.

In rabbinic times Leviticus was the first book studied by children. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 7:3, where Rabbi Issi attributes the following reasoning to God: “Sacrifices are pure and children are pure; let the pure come and engage in the pure.”

See *Zohar* 1:239a; Vol. 3, p. 457, n. 729.

157. **Solomon…is intimating…** Since generally God deals with a person *according to his ways*, if the wise Solomon says otherwise, his words must allude to a deeper meaning. On Solomon’s wisdom, see 1 Kings 5:9–14.

158. **When the judgments…** Heavenly powers, depicted as God’s eyes examining human conduct. If they discover wicked people, a righteous human is killed for their sins.

See BT *Shabbat* 33b (Munich MS): “Rabbi Gorion (according to others, Rabbi Yosef son of Rabbi Shema’yah) said, ‘When there are righteous ones in the generation, the righteous are seized for the sin of the generation. When there are no righteous in the generation, schoolchildren are seized for the sin of the generation.’”

Here Rabbi Shim’on adds that if the wicked do not repent, then the removal of the righteous individual dooms the wicked, since that virtuous person is no longer present to plead for mercy.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 2:6; *Kallah Rabbati* 6:4; Rashi on BT *Ta’anit* 11a, s.v. *ha-tsaddiq avad*; *Zohar* 1:67b–68a, 180a; 2:10b, 53a, 195a. Cf. *Mekhilta, Neziqin* 18; BT *Shabbat* 55a, *Avodah Zarah* 4a. On the death of the righteous as atonement, see Vol. 1, p. 381, n. 296.

The verse in Zechariah reads: *The eyes of* YHVH משוטטים (*meshotetim*), *range, over the whole earth*. Here, instead of the masculine form *meshotetim*, the *Zohar* employs the feminine form משוטטות (*meshotetot*), as in the similar formulation in 2 Chronicles 16:9. See *Zohar* 1:241a; 2:107a; 3:130a (*IR*), 293b (*IZ*).

159. **person should dwell…** Cf. the story told by Rabbi Yose son of Kisma in *Avot* 6:9; BT *Sukkah* 56b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot De’ot* 6:1; *Zohar* 3:218a (*RM*).

160. **Rav Ḥisda lived originally…** A third-century Babylonian *amora* who rose from poverty to wealth.

Cappadocia is a province in Asia Minor; Sepphoris, an ancient Jewish city in Galilee, renowned as the seat of the Sanhedrin and home to mighty scholars—called here “shield bearers” because they defend their generation or because they fight the battle of Torah. The juxtaposition of Cappadocians and Sepphoris apparently derives from the phrase “Cappadocians of Sepphoris” (JT *Shevi’it* 9:5, 39a), that is, Cappadocian Jews living in Sepphoris. Apparently, the author(s) of the *Zohar* imagined (or pretended) that Cappadocia was a Galilean village near Sepphoris. In the Talmudic context, the “Cappadocians of Sepphoris” were not treated well by their neighbors. According to *ZḤ* 22a (*MhN*), certain Cappadocians are “lacking in good deeds.”

On Cappadocia in the *Zohar*, see Scholem, “She’elot be-Viqqoret ha-Zohar,” 40–46 (and the appended note by S.

Klein, 56); idem, *Major Trends*, 169; idem, *Kabbalah*, 222; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:63–64; above, p. 128, n. 217.

On the importance of relocating to a place of learning, see the last two references in the preceding note. On Rav Ḥisda's rise from poverty, see BT *Shabbat* 140b, *Pesaḥim* 113a, *Mo'ed Qatan* 28a. It seems impossible that Rabbi Shim'on (who lived in the second century) could refer to Rav Ḥisda (who lived in the following century). In order to explain the anachronism, several commentators suggest that this paragraph was originally a marginal gloss. However, it appears in early manuscripts (C9, V1, V3, V7) and in Joseph Angelet's *Livnat ha-Sappir*, 83c. Apparently the author is either unconcerned about the anachronism or being playful. See Galante; *DE*.

161. **Now, would Solomon…** How could the wise Solomon have characterized his days as futile or have said *Futility of futilities! All is futile!* (Ecclesiastes 1:2)?

The phrase טיבו וקשוט (*teivu uqshot*), "goodness and truth," derives from *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 24:49 and 47:29, where it renders חסד ואמת (*ḥesed ve-emet*), *kindness and truth*. The verse in Chronicles concludes: *in place of his father David; he prospered and all Israel obeyed him*.

162. **He was called by seven names…** The six additional names appear in 2 Samuel 12:25 (Jedidiah), Proverbs 30:1 (Agur, Bin Yake, Ithiel), Proverbs 31:1 (Lemuel), and Ecclesiastes 1:1 (Koheleth). Actually, the four names in Proverbs do not necessarily refer to Solomon. In the opening two chapters of Ecclesiastes, the designation קהלת (*qohelet*)—apparently meaning "one who assembles"—serves as an epithet for Solomon or a king like Solomon.

Here the seven names correspond to the seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*, the last of whom "assembles" all of them or the entire sefirotic decade. Fittingly, a קהל (*qahal*), "congregation," must include at least ten members. The number one hundred alludes to all of the sefirotic

aspects, ten for each *sefirah*. The expression *assembly of Jacob* alludes to the fact that *Shekhinah* receives the sefirotic emanation from Her divine partner, *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by Jacob. Cf. Her name כנסת ישראל (*Keneset Yisra'el*), Assembly of Israel.

On Solomon's names, see *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 39; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:10 (on 1:1); *Qohelet Rabbah* 1:2 (on 1:1); *Zohar* 3:47b; Galante. On the quorum of ten for prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 21b.

163. **he composed three books...** Traditionally, all three of these are attributed to Solomon. See the opening verse of each book; the end of the first paragraph of the preceding note; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:10 (on 1:1); *Zohar* 3:64a.

The love poetry of Song of Songs corresponds to the *sefirah* of *Ḥesed* (Love); the bitter tone of Ecclesiastes, criticizing humanity for striving after futility, corresponds to *Din* (Judgment); the balanced style of many verses in Proverbs corresponds to the balanced, middle *sefirah: Tif'eret*.

164. **mystery of הבל (*hevel*)...** This is the favorite word of the author of Ecclesiastes. Its basic meaning is "breath, vapor," and especially in this biblical book, "that which is empty and fleeting, futility, absurdity." Rabbi Shim'on insists, though, that when Solomon used the word, he meant not "futility" but "breath." Human breath combines air and moisture, and then turns into voice. Divine breath issues from the mouth of *Binah* and turns into the voice of *Tif'eret*, which is also known as "air" and includes "water," symbolizing *Ḥesed*. The divine breath proceeds through *Shekhinah* and then animates all of existence.

On the cosmic significance of the breath of schoolchildren, see BT *Shabbat* 119b: "Resh Lakish said in the name of Rabbi Yehudah the Prince, 'The world endures only for the sake of the breath of schoolchildren.'" Here, Rabbi Shim'on's paraphrase adds "who have not sinned," which means, he explains, not just that they are not liable

for sins they may have committed (or may have committed unintentionally), but that they have not sinned at all. These truly innocent creatures evoke divine protection for the world.

See *Zohar* 1:1b, 47a, 146b; 3:17b. On the guardians of the city, see *Midrash Tehillim* 127:1. On *hevel* in Ecclesiastes as "breath," see above, p. 44. On "air" including the "water" of *Ḥesed* (along with the "fire" of *Gevurah*), see above, p. 85.

On God creating the world by breath, see Psalms 33:6; *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:9; and Shabbetai Donnolo, *Sefer Ḥakhmoni*, on *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:10 (in Matt, *Essential Kabbalah*, 92, 194): "God, great, mighty and awesome, powerfully breathed out a breath, and cosmic space expanded to the boundary determined by divine wisdom, until God said, 'Enough!'"

On God sustaining the world by breath, see *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 5; *Midrash Temurah*, 2 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:109); *Zohar* 1:47a, 148a.

165. **Breath is voice...** Human breath is potential, becoming actualized in voice. In the divine realm, the breath issuing from *Binah* becomes the voice of *Tif'eret*.

166. **breath that he inherited...** Solomon inherited the divine breath from his father, King David, linked with *Shekhinah*, who Herself conveys the breath and is identified with it. Thereby Solomon was "inspired," though he also drew on the *sefirot* above *Shekhinah*, as indicated by his numerous names (see above, note 162.) By saying *I have seen everything in the days of hevli, my breath*, Solomon alluded to his supernal source—the breath of *Shekhinah*, animating all.

167. **when this breath sucks from Judgment...** When *Shekhinah* is influenced by harsh Judgment, then even *a righteous one perishes* (for whatever minor faults he has) בצדקו (*be-tsidqo*), *in his righteousness* [or: *justice*]—through the harshness manifesting itself in *Shekhinah*, who is known as צדק (*tsedeq*), "righteousness" (or strict "justice").

Conversely, when *Shekhinah* is influenced by Compassion, then *a wicked one prolongs his life* despite *his evil*. All depends on the timing and quality of the divine breath.

On the connection between harsh Judgment and *righteousness*, see *Zohar* 3:85b.

168. עדיק אובד **(*Tsaddiq oved*), *Perishes a righteous one…*** The simple sense of the verse is: *A righteous one perishes in his righteousness, and a wicked one prolongs his life in his evil*. Here, Rabbi Shim'on understands it differently: [Someone] *perishes a righteous one*… [and] *prolongs a wicked one*. He argues that if the verse were referring to a righteous one perishing on his own, then the passive form אבוד (*avud*), *is perished*, would be more appropriate. The active form אובד (*oved*) is better understood in a transitive sense: Judgment (operating through *Shekhinah*) *perishes* the *righteous one*. When Judgment is overwhelmed by Compassion, then it *prolongs* the *wicked one*, bearing with him patiently.

On the phrase *tsaddiq oved*, see *Zohar* 2:11a; 3:46a, 291b (*IZ*). For interpretations of a similar phrase in Isaiah, see above, p. 38 and n. 168. For a range of interpretations here, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

169. **aromatic vapor…** קטורא (*Qitora*), whose precise meaning here is perhaps intentionally unclear. The word can mean "perfuming, fumigating" (see BT *Beitsah* 23a). Cf. קטרא (*qetara*), "cloud" or "incense"; and Hebrew קיטור (*qitor*), "smoke."

170. **He said, "A crowning…"** The speaker is Rabbi Shim'on, who sees the vapor as a precious crown hovering over the fertile field.

"Mud" renders טינתא (*tinata*), apparently based on טינא (*tina*), "clay, mud." See *Targum Yonatan*, Judges 15:15; and Radak, ad loc.

171. ***He smelled the fragrance of his garments… fragrance of my son…*** Isaac smelled the fragrance of the garments worn by his son Jacob, when the latter sought

Isaac's blessing. The first formulation attributes the fragrance to the garments, while the second one attributes it to Jacob himself.

172. **As Jacob entered...** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:22; and *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 11: "When Jacob entered, the fragrance of the Garden of Eden entered with him." See *Zohar* 1:142b–143a.

See BT *Ta'anit* 29b, in the name of Rav: "*He said, 'See, the fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH*'... Like the fragrance of a field of apple trees."

In Kabbalah both the apple orchard and the Garden of Eden symbolize *Shekhinah*. She is filled with apple trees, namely, the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who are symbolized by the three patriarchs and whose respective colors all appear in the apple: the white pulp, the red skin, and the green stem.

See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 35–37; *Zohar* 1:36a, 85a–b, 122a, 128b, 139a, 142b, 143b, 224b, 249b; 2:60b, 61b; 3:74a, 84a, 133b (*IR*), 135b (*IR*), 286b–287a, 288a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 365.

173. **Those garments belonged to Adam...** According to a rabbinic tradition, Esau's garments (worn by Jacob when he sought Isaac's blessing) had originally been fashioned by God for Adam. When Adam was cast out of the Garden, he took these garments with him. They were passed on through the generations to Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, Ham, and then to Nimrod, King of Babylonia and Assyria, whose spectacular success as a hunter (Genesis 10:9) derived from the fact that he wore these supernatural clothes. Seeing Nimrod in these clothes, Esau coveted them and killed him for them.

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 24; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 27:15; *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:13; 65:16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 12; Rashi on BT *Pesaḥim* 54b, s.v. *bigdo shel adam ha-rishon*; *Midrash Aggadah*, Genesis 27:15; *Sefer ha-*

Yashar, Toledot, 133; *Zohar* 1:73b, 137b, 142b; 2:208b; *ZḤ* 65a (*ShS*); Galante. Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Genesis 48:22; *Bereshit Rabbah* 97(98):6. On the *coats of skin* fashioned by God for Adam and Eve, see Vol. 3, p. 348, n. 253.

174. ***They sewed fig leaves…*** The verse describes the reaction of Adam and Eve when they ate of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge: *The eyes of the two were opened, and they knew they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves and made themselves loincloths*. One might suppose that these were the clothes handed down through the generations, eventually reaching Esau and Jacob. But how could that be, since these were merely *fig leaves* sewn together by Adam and Eve, whereas those were *coats of skin* made by God Himself? In fact, the *coats of skin* were supernatural, as indicated by the Aramaic translation of this phrase in *Targum Onqelos:* לבושין דיקר (*levushin diqar*), "garments of glory (on their skin)."

175. **made by a complete name…** The garments fashioned by God for Adam and Eve were made by the power of the complete divine name *YHVH Elohim*, as indicated by the verse: *YHVH Elohim made coats of skin for Adam and his wife*. Heaven and earth, on the other hand, were made solely by the power of the name *Elohim*, as indicated by the opening verse of the Torah: *In the beginning Elohim created heaven and earth*.

This distinction seems to be contradicted by the account of creation in Genesis 2: *These are the generations of heaven and earth when they were created, on the day that YHVH Elohim made earth and heaven*. However, Rabbi Shim'on explains that the original creation was carried out solely by the name *Elohim*, indicating divine Justice; when God saw that the world could not endure by Justice alone, He balanced Justice with Compassion, which is represented by the name *YHVH*. Therefore the account in Genesis 2 employs the complete name *YHVH Elohim*.

On the “complete name,” see *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:3. On the complete name in Genesis 2:4, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15. On the unique qualities of *YHVH* and *Elohim*, see also *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:3; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:6

176. **garments came into the hands of that wicked Esau…** See above, note 173. If Esau acquired Adam’s garments, then what happened to Eve’s? And how could Adam and Eve have ever parted with such splendid garments? Surely they would have wanted to be buried in them.

177. **in those garments they resembled…** Wearing those garments, Adam and Eve resembled God Himself, who is described as being *clothed in splendor*. Once God was *wrapped in light as in a garment*, He created the world.

See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayaqhel* 7: “Rabbi Shim’on son of Rabbi Yehotsadak asked Rabbi Shemu’el son of Naḥman, ‘Since you are a master of *aggadah*, tell me how the blessed Holy One created the world.’ He replied, ‘When the blessed Holy One wished to create the world, He enwrapped Himself in light and created the world, as is said: *Wrapped in light as in a garment*, and afterward: *spreading the heavens like a curtain*.’”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:4 (and Theodor, ad loc.); *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 3; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 2:26; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 493–94; Ezra’s letter, ed. Scholem, “Te’udah Ḥadashah,” 157–58; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 110–11; *Zohar* 1:2a, 15b, 29a, 90a (*ST*), 245a; 2:164b; Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 5a.

178. **How can we establish *the precious* [*garments of Esau*]…** The full verse reads: *Rebekah took the precious garments of Esau, her elder son, which were with her in the house, and clothed Jacob, her younger son*. According to midrashic sources, the wording בגדי עשו החמודות (*bigdei esav ha-ḥamudot*), *the precious garments of Esau*, implies that Esau

חמד (*ḥamad*), “coveted,” these supernatural garments (handed down from Adam and Eve) when he saw them on King Nimrod. But if Esau’s *precious garments* were not the “coveted garments,” then what is the precise meaning of the word *ḥamudot* (*precious*) in this verse? Rabbi Shim’on explains that here *precious* means “resembling royal garments,” which are carefully preserved and kept scented. Therefore, Isaac smelled their fragrance.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:16 (and Theodor’s n. 10); *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 27:15; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 24 (and Luria’s n. 60); above, note 173.

179. ***smelled the fragrance of his garments…of my son…*** Now Rabbi Shim’on explains the switch from *fragrance of his garments* to *fragrance of my son* (see above at note 171). At first, Isaac thought that the fragrance emanated from the garments; but then he sensed a paradisial fragrance, emanating from Jacob himself.

See above, note 172. The verse reads: *He smelled the fragrance of his garments and blessed him and said, “See, the fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH.”*

180. **how did Isaac know *the fragrance of a field…*** How was he familiar with the paradisial fragrance of the divine field, *Shekhinah*? First, because the field to which *Isaac went out to meditate* was in fact the field of the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham had purchased from the Hittites as his family burial site. Isaac perceived *Shekhinah* hovering over this field and discovered Her fragrance; from then on, he prayed there daily. Abraham, on the other hand, already had a fixed place for prayer.

The verse in Genesis 24 reads: *Isaac went out* לשוח (*la-suaḥ*) *to meditate* [or: *stroll*], *in the field as evening turned*. Traditionally this verse is cited to prove that Isaac instituted the afternoon prayer. See BT *Berakhot* 26b: “Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Ḥanina said, ‘The patriarchs instituted the prayers.’… Abraham instituted the morning prayer…. Isaac

instituted the afternoon prayer, as is said: *Isaac went out to meditate in the field as evening turned*…. Jacob instituted the evening prayer." See JT *Berakhot* 4:1, 7a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:9; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 16; *Zohar* 1:132a.

On *Shekhinah* as field, see above, note 172. According to *Zohar* 1:127b, Abraham did in fact pray daily in the field of the cave of Machpelah, because he perceived radiant light and sublime fragrance there.

181. **other element: the fragrance… on Mount Moriah…** The other reason that Isaac recognized the divine aroma was that he had sensed it when he was bound on the altar on Mount מוריה (*Moriyyah*), "Moriah," which is named for מר (*mor*), "myrrh," alluding to the fragrance of *Shekhinah*.

"All was present" apparently means that all of this (the fragrance of the field of Machpelah and the fragrance of Mount Moriah) was evoked for Isaac by Jacob's appearance. Further, the Garden of Eden (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) entered with Jacob (see above at note 172).

On *moriyyah* and *mor*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 55:7; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 40; *Zohar* 1:120a.

182. **Torah should have been written beginning with…** According to a rabbinic tradition, the Torah should have opened with this verse, since it introduces the first *mitsvah* given to the people of Israel: the Passover offering. Here, Rabbi Yitsḥak offers a different reason: because this verse alludes to the renewal of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the new moon) and Her imminent union with *Tif'eret* (the blessed Holy One).

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4 (in the name of Rabbi Yannai); *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 11 (in the name of Rabbi Yitsḥak, as here; see Buber's n. 59); Rashi's famous comment on Genesis 1:1; Galante. The verse in Exodus concludes: *it is the first for you of the months of the year*.

183. **The fact that it is not written…** If this verse alludes to *Shekhinah*, then one might expect the feminine form—זאת (*zot*), *this*, which symbolizes *Shekhinah*—rather than the masculine form, זה (*zeh*), *this*, which symbolizes *Yesod*. However, Rabbi Yitsḥak explains that *zeh* and *zot* (*Yesod* and *Shekhinah*) are joined as one, and according to a general principle, in such a case the male dominates. Therefore the verse concludes: הוא (*hu*), *he* [normally rendered: *it*], *is the first for you of the months of the year*.

On *zeh* and *zot*, see above, notes 108, 123. On the praiseworthiness of the male, see above, note 153.

184. ***For you, for you*, twice; why?** Why is the phrase repeated in this verse: *This month is for you head of months; it is the first for you of the months of the year?*

185. **From both of them…** The repetition of the phrase *for you* emphasizes that the union of the divine couple, brought about by the people's sanctifying the new moon, is intended to benefit Israel alone.

186. **When Jubilee illumines the moon…** Jubilee (and *Day of Atonement*) symbolize *Binah*; the moon (and *month*) symbolize *Shekhinah*. Here *Binah* is also known as *tenth*, because She includes all ten *sefirot*; so the phrase *on the tenth of this month* alludes to *Binah*'s illumination of *Shekhinah*.

Rabbi Abba understands the phrases לחדש הזה (*la-ḥodesh ha-zeh*), *of this month*, and לחדש השביעי הזה (*la-ḥodesh ha-shevi'i ha-zeh*), *of this seventh month*, hyperliterally: *to this month, to this seventh month*—namely, to *Shekhinah*.

According to the Bible, every seventh year is a Sabbatical, during which the land must lie fallow and at the end of which all debts are remitted (Leviticus 25:1–24; Deuteronomy 15:1–3). After seven Sabbaticals comes the Jubilee, proclaimed every fifty years, when slaves are released and land reverts to its original owner (Leviticus 25:8–55). In Kabbalah the Jubilee symbolizes *Binah*, who in general is characterized by the number fifty, based on BT

Rosh ha-Shanah 21b, where Rav and Shemu'el teach: "Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)." As Jubilee, *Binah* is the source of liberation, including the liberation from Egyptian bondage.

187. ***Let every man take a lamb…*** By taking and sacrificing *a lamb*, Israel was attacking a false god of the Egyptians, who worshiped the lamb (perhaps as a symbol of the constellation Aries). Rabbi Abba indicates that the lamb symbolizes the chief demonic power ("crown") worshiped by the Egyptians. Israel's act below stimulates God to smash the corresponding demonic power above.

See Genesis 46:34; Exodus 8:22; *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 5; *Targum Onqelos*, Exodus 8:22; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:17; *Shemot Rabbah* 11:3; 16:2–3; Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 8:22; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:46; *Zohar* 3:250b–251b; below at note 206; *OY*; Galante.

Exodus 12:21 reads: *Pull and take yourselves a sheep for your families and slaughter the Passover offering*. In the verse from Genesis, Jacob lists for Esau what he has acquired while laboring for Laban: *I have acquired ox and donkey, sheep, and male and female slaves*. On the demonic significance of these items, see *Zohar* 1:166b. For another set of three demonic powers, see above at notes 133–37.

Exodus 12:9 specifies how the Passover lamb is to be consumed: *Do not eat any of it raw, nor in any way cooked in water, but fire-roasted*. On the principle of "as below, so above," see above, note 70.

188. **pulled on the tenth and slaughtered on the fourteenth…** The Passover lamb is to be taken on the tenth of the month and then *kept by you until the fourteenth*, when it will be slaughtered (Exodus 12:6). Rabbi Abba explains that these four intervening days correspond to 400 years of Egyptian servitude decreed upon Israel by God in a revelation to Abraham (see Genesis 15:13). The Israelites

were actually enslaved—bound by the demonic power of the lamb—for only 210 years, but still, because of the original intention, it was considered as if Israel had completed the full sentence.

On the chronology, see *Seder Olam Rabbah* 3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 48; Rashi on Genesis 15:13; Sarna, *Genesis*, 116. On the binding of the lamb, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:17.

189. **Why *at twilight?...*** First of all, because as the day darkens, Judgment looms; so this was the appropriate time to subdue the demonic power, deriving from harsh Judgment. Secondly, because the Egyptian bondage was first revealed at twilight to Abraham; it was then that "this matter was handed over to him," i.e., to the power of harsh Judgment.

In midrashic literature, Abraham's terrifying experience is interpreted as an allusion to the various nations that will subjugate Israel. Here, Rabbi Abba applies the phrase *terror and great darkness* to the demonic crowns. Yet "it is all"; that is, there is no real contradiction between these interpretations, since Israel's subjugation—both in Egypt and throughout history—is effected by these demonic powers.

For the earlier interpretation, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 9; *Bereshit Rabbah* 44:17; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 13:5. Cf. *Zohar* 1:227a.

190. ***Wiping out, I will wipe out...*** The verse reads: *Wiping out, I will wipe out* [or: *I will surely wipe out*] *the memory of Amalek from under the heavens!* The doubling of the verb (*wiping out, I will wipe out*) indicates that if Israel attacks the earthly enemy, God will eliminate the corresponding demonic power above. Similarly in Egypt, when God instructs Israel to slaughter the lamb, He is saying, in effect: "Perform an action below, and I will smash their power above." See above at note 187.

On Israel and God cooperating in the elimination of Amalek, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3:15; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 17; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 12; *Zohar* 2:66a. See Deuteronomy 25:19: *You shall wipe out the memory of Amalek from under the heavens; you shall not forget!* On the doubling of the verb (*wiping out, I will wipe out*), see *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Beshallaḥ*) 2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 17:14; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:66.

191. **until all those rulers above were severed…** Until the demonic powers were detached from their divine source of power.

See above, notes 89, 133. The verse in Leviticus reads: *For Mine are the Children of Israel as* עבדים (*avadim*), *servants* [or: *slaves*]; *they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt*.

192. **שאור (*se'or*)…מחמצת (*maḥmetset*)…תמץ (*ḥamets*)…** These three terms for "leaven" (or leavened substances) symbolize demonic power(s)—either those ruling over other nations or the evil impulse within each person. By removing these three forms of leaven, Israel eliminates all demonic influence, demonstrating their liberation from alien dominion.

On leaven as the evil impulse, see the prayer attributed to Rabbi Tanḥum in JT *Berakhot* 4:2, 7d: "May it be Your will, *YHVH* my God and God of my fathers, that You break and destroy the yoke of the evil impulse from our heart. For You created us to do Your will, and we must do Your will; You desire it and we desire it. So who prevents it? The leaven in the dough."

See BT *Berakhot* 17a, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *se'or she-ba-issah*; *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Noaḥ* 4; *Zohar* 1:142a–b, 226b; 2:40b–41a (*Piq*), 182a, 183a–b; 3:95b. Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 132 (and Wolfson's note).

The designation רשותא אחרא (*reshuta aḥara*), "other dominion," is modeled on סטרא אחרא (*Sitra Aḥra*), "the Other

Side," the *Zohar*'s standard name for the demonic realm. "Alien god" derives from Deuteronomy 32:12; Malachi 2:11; Psalms 81:10. "Other gods" appears in Exodus 20:3 and frequently.

On different names for leaven, see *Zohar* 2:182a; 3:251b. On three demonic powers, see above, note 187. Exodus 12:15 reads in full: *Seven days shall you eat unleavened bread; surely on the first day you shall remove leaven, from your houses, for whoever eats* חמץ (*ḥamets*), *leavened stuff, that person will be cut off from Israel—from the first day to the seventh day*. Here, the *Zohar* substitutes מחמצת (*maḥmetset*), *what is leavened*—which appears several verses later (12:19)—for *ḥamets, leavened stuff*.

193. **If so, all days of the year...** If the purpose of removing leaven is to eliminate the demonic powers, then why is this command limited to just the seven days of Passover? It should apply all year long.

194. **He replied...** Rabbi Abba replied, explaining that it is necessary to remove leaven and eat *matstsah*, "unleavened bread," only when one is obligated to demonstrate his freedom, namely, during the festival of Passover.

The "glorious garments" in the parable correspond to *matstsah*, with which the people of Israel adorn themselves each year in commemoration of their liberation from Egyptian bondage and their ascent to glory and holiness.

"Royal official" renders רופינוס (*rufinus*), which derives from the Latin *rufus*, "redhaired." The name Rufinus is shared by various early Christian saints, a fourth-century Roman minister, and Tineus Rufus, the second-century governor of Palestine ordered by Emperor Hadrian to crush the Jewish rebellion. In the *Zohar, rufinus* usually refers to a royal official. See 1:148b; 2:37a, 58b, 68a, 85a, 175a. For the medieval Castilian usage, see Corominas, *Diccionario*, s.v. *rufián*. Cf. Aramaic, רופילא (*rufila*), "high official."

195. **spelled מצת (*matstsat*)...** Rabbi Shim'on contends that in this verse the word מצות (*matstsot*), *unleavened bread* (plural), is spelled deficiently, without the letter ו (*vav*): מצת—which can be pronounced *matstsat*, a construct form of מצה (*matstsah*), "strife," which is a homonym of the more familiar *matstsah*, "unleavened bread" (singular). The sense of "strife" alludes to *Shekhinah* as manifesting Judgment, and the lack of the letter *vav* alludes to Her separation from Her male partner, *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by this letter. (The numerical value of *vav*—six—signifies *Tif'eret* and the five *sefirot* surrounding Him: *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*.) The deficient spelling implies the deficient state of *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the moon.

Similarly, according to Rabbi Shim'on, in the opening verse of Ezekiel the word מראות (*mar'ot*), *visions of* [*God*], is spelled deficiently, without the ו (*vav*): מראת—which can be pronounced *mar'at*, "a vision of," in the singular, alluding to the isolation of *Shekhinah* in exile, separated from Her partner.

Actually, in the Masoretic text of Exodus 12:15 the full spelling appears: מצות (*matstsot*), *unleavened bread*. The deficient spelling—מצת (*matstsot*)—appears in Exodus 12:18; 13:6. See *Zohar* 2:41b (*Piq*), 182b; *Minḥat Shai* on Exodus 12:15, 18; 23:15; Leviticus 2:4; 7:12; Numbers 9:11.

Similarly, in the Masoretic text of Ezekiel 1:1 the full spelling appears: מראות (*mar'ot*), *visions of*. See *Zohar* 2:82a–b, 124b; *Minḥat Shai* on Ezekiel 1:1. The deficient spelling —מראת (*mar'ot*)—appears in Genesis 46:2. See *Zohar* 1:211a; cf. above, note 66.

For similar instances of a difference between the Masoretic spelling and the *Zohar*'s reading, see *Zohar* 1:83b (Vol. 2, p. 34, n. 256), 84a (Vol. 2, p. 37, n. 289), 236b (Vol. 3, p. 435, n. 644); 3:254a (*RM*). On this phenomenon, see Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 50, 131–32, n. 125.

For the word מצה (*matstsah*), "strife," see Isaiah 58:4; Proverbs 13:10; 17:19. For the play on the two homonyms,

see *Zohar* 3:251b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 135. Cf. *Zohar* 1:226b (Vol. 3, p. 364, n. 333).

196. ***bread of poverty*** In this verse *matstsah*, "unleavened bread," is called לחם עני (*leḥem oni*), *bread of poverty* [or: *affliction*]. In the *Zohar, bread of poverty* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who remains impoverished until She is filled by the rich ingredients of Her male partner, *Tif'eret* or *Yesod*.

See *Zohar* 1:33a, 47b, 157a, 235b, 238a, 245b–246a, 250b; 2:183a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 112–13. Cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 115b–116a.

197. **holy sign had not been uncovered...** Israel had undergone circumcision in Egypt (see above, note 74), thereby entering the realm of *Shekhinah*, but they had not completed the ritual, which involves two steps. First the foreskin is cut and removed, disclosing the mucous membrane, which is then torn down the center and pulled back, revealing the corona. The act of tearing and pulling back the membrane is called פריעה (*peri'ah*), "uncovering" the corona. See M *Shabbat* 19:6: "If one circumcises but does not uncover the circumcision, it is as if he has not circumcised."

Here Rabbi Shim'on indicates that because Israel had not yet "uncovered" the corona, they had not revealed the "holy sign," or "holy letter" (see above, note 84), and *Yesod* (the divine phallus) could not unite with *Shekhinah*, leaving Her deficient. Finally, when the people of Israel arrived at Marah in the wilderness, they were instructed to fulfill the *statute and law* of circumcision completely, thereby effecting the union of *Shekhinah* and Her partner (symbolized respectively by *statute* and *law*).

In rabbinic literature the verse *There He set them statute and law* is applied to other fundamental laws, such as Sabbath, courts of law, sexual morality, and honoring one's parents. See *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1; BT *Sanhedrin* 56b. Here, Rabbi Shim'on acknowledges that "we have

established this verse as referring to" such matters; yet, "it was all," that is, the verse includes those *mitsvot* as well as *peri'ah*, "uncovering."

On *peri'ah*, see *Zohar* 1:13a, 32a (*Tos*), 32a–b, 93b, 96b, 98b (*ST*), 238b; 2:3b, 60b, 125b; 3:91b, 95b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 133; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (67). On the enactment of *peri'ah* at Marah, see *Zohar* 2:60b, 125b. On חק (*ḥoq*), *statute*, as alluding to circumcision, see *Tosefta Berakhot* 6:13; BT *Shabbat* 137b; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 20; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥayyei Sarah* 3, 6; *Shemot Rabbah* 19:4. On *statute and law* as alluding respectively to *Shekhinah* and Her partner, see *Zohar* 2:60b; cf. 3:113a. For another interpretation (as alluding to *Yesod* and *Tif'eret*), see *OY*.

198. **uncovered in the days of Joshua...** When he circumcised the Israelites. However, Rabbi Shim'on indicates that Joshua circumcised (and "uncovered") only those Israelites born after the Exodus; the Israelites born in Egypt were circumcised while still there and soon afterward were "uncovered" at Marah.

On the notion that Joshua performed *peri'ah* on all the Israelites, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29; *Zohar* 1:93b. The full verse reads: *Although all the people who came out had been circumcised, all the people born in the wilderness on the way, after coming out of Egypt, had not been circumcised*.

199. **At first, you ate *matstsot*...** At first Israel ate *matstsah*, or *bread of poverty*, befitting the deficient state of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) and their own incomplete circumcision. Now that they have fulfilled the ritual, thereby stimulating union above, they will eat the manna, which issues from *Tif'eret* (symbolized by *heaven*).

On *bread of poverty*, see above, note 196. On manna deriving from *Tif'eret*, see *Zohar* 1:157b, 246a; 2:61b, 183a; 3:95b, 292b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 133. On the verse in Genesis, see *Zohar* 1:143b, 224b.

200. **observe those days…** Each year Israel commemorates and celebrates the Exodus by eating *matstsah*, which derives from *Shekhinah*. The commandment *You shall keep the matstsot* means *You shall keep the Festival of Matstsot*, but here Rabbi Shim'on insists on a hyperliteral reading: *keep the matstsot*—the bread that issues from *Shekhinah*.

Often *covenant* symbolizes *Yesod* (the divine phallus and site of the covenant of circumcision), but here *Shekhinah* is linked specifically with the first phase of circumcision (see above, note 197). Appropriately, the same verbal command, *keep*, pertains to both *matstsot* and circumcision, both of which reflect *Shekhinah* ("a single rung"). On the association of *Shekhinah* with the root שמר (*shmr*), "to keep, observe," see below, p. 391, n. 74.

201. **How could Moses not have uncovered them?…** When he circumcised the Israelites in Egypt, why did he leave them in such an unfulfilled state? Rabbi Shim'on explains that if Moses had performed the ritual of *peri'ah*, the Exodus would have been delayed while Israel healed. Therefore, he circumcised them without *peri'ah* and they had to eat *bread of poverty*; but they were able to depart from Egypt quickly.

The verse in Deuteronomy describes the consumption of the Passover offering: *Seven days you shall eat with it unleavened bread, bread of poverty, for in haste you went out from the land of Egypt*. The full verse in Exodus reads: *They baked the dough that they had brought out of Egypt in cakes of unleavened bread, for it had not leavened, since they had been driven out of Egypt and could not tarry, and provisions too they had not made for themselves*.

202. **When Israel entered the Land…** In Egypt the people of Israel were not yet "uncovered," so they shared *Shekhinah*'s state of deficiency and *poverty*, and in fact kept Her in that state. *Shekhinah* (the moon) was not illumined by *Yesod* (the sun). She was poor because She was not united

with *Yesod*, who conveys the entire flow of emanation and is thus known as כל (*kol*), *all* (Ideally, the *all* of *Yesod* links *heaven* [*Tif'eret*] and *earth* [*Shekhinah*]).

The Israelites who entered the land were circumcised and "uncovered" by Joshua. Consequently they stimulated the union of *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, and they could dwell in the land (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) in a state of fulfillment—both they and She no longer *lacking all*.

The verse in Deuteronomy reads: *A land where you will eat bread without scarcity—you will not lack* כל (*kol*), *anything* [or: *all*] *in it* [or: *her*].

The verse in Chronicles reads: *Yours, O YHVH, are greatness, power, beauty, victory, splendor—yes, all that is in heaven and on earth*. For its kabbalistic decoding, see Vol. 3, p. 426, n. 606. Cf. Vol. 3, p. 171, n. 540.

203. **by eating...** Namely, *matstsah* each year on Passover.

204. **As for their eating it there in the Land...** One might wonder why Israel would eat *bread of poverty* once they had entered the Promised Land in a state of fulfillment. The purpose, however, was to remember the Exodus.

In the time to come, the union of the divine couple (symbolized by sun and moon) will be constant.

205. ***On the tenth of this month...*** The verse reads: *On the tenth of this month, let every man take a lamb for a father's house, a lamb for a household*. The phrase *the tenth* alludes to *Binah*, who includes all ten *sefirot* and is symbolized by the Day of Atonement. *Binah* conducts the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah*. In the verse in Exodus, the simple sense of the phrase לחדש הזה (*la-ḥodesh ha-zeh*) is *of this month*, but Rabbi Yose understands it hyperliterally: *to this month* —namely, to *Shekhinah*. See above, note 186.

206. **three knots...** Three demonic powers, to which all other demonic powers are bound. Of these three, the chief one is called *sheep*. See above, note 187.

"*Sheep* is bound to *sheep*" apparently means that the earthly sheep is bound to the demonic power known as *sheep*. The Israelites in Egypt are commanded to bind and keep the lamb until they slaughter it on the fourteenth of the month, thereby overcoming the demonic forces.

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:17; above, notes 187–88. For various interpretations, see *OY*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*. Exodus 12:6 reads in full: *It shall be kept by you until the fourteenth day of this month, and the whole congregation of the community of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight*.

207. ***YHVH has a slaughter…*** Both verses in Isaiah describe God's vengeance against Israel's enemy, Edom, who in rabbinic literature often symbolizes the Roman Empire, and in medieval Jewish literature, Christianity.

The verse in Isaiah 34 reads: *For YHVH has a slaughter in Bozrah, a great butchery in the land of Edom*. The verse in Isaiah 63 reads: *Who is this coming from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah—majestic in His attire, striding in the greatness of His strength?* Bozrah was the ancient capital of Edom.

According to a kabbalistic reading of the verse in Zechariah, *YHVH* alludes to *Tif'eret*, and *His name* to *Shekhinah*. The Messianic redemption signifies their union.

The passages that follow in the standard printed editions of the *Zohar* (40b–43b) are entitled *Ra'aya Meheimna*. Actually, only the material from the middle of 41b through the middle of 43a belongs to this later stratum of Zoharic literature. The rest is part of *Piqqudin* (Commandments), kabbalistic interpretations of the commandments, whose style is closer to that of the main part of the *Zohar*. These passages from *Piqqudin* will be translated in a supplementary volume. See Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 224–25.

1. שגיונות **(*shigyonot*)** Probably a literary or musical term; the etymology and precise meaning are uncertain. See Psalms 7:1 and below.

2. **Why this difference…** Why does the phrase *a prayer of* appear only with the name of the prophet Habakkuk?

Actually, *a prayer of* appears also with the name of Moses, greatest of the prophets (Psalms 90:1), as well as with the name of David (Psalms 17:1; 86:1). See *Aggadat Bereshit* 6:1; *Zohar* 3:195a. On the verse in Habakkuk, see *Bahir* 46 (68).

3. **Elisha attained…** Elisha received *a double portion* of the spirit of his master Elijah (2 Kings 2:9–10). Furthermore, he shared the title of Moses, *man of God* (frequently in this chapter of Kings).

Despite his special status, Elisha did not wish to trouble God by asking for miraculous sustenance; rather, he let himself be cared for by the Shunammite woman. The relation between Elisha and Habakkuk is clarified below.

On the mystical significance of the title *man of God*, see above, p. 74 and n. 17. On others who shared this title, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 342; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:1; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 20; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 37.

4. **What is *a great woman*?…** The simple sense of *great* is that the Shunammite woman was "respected, well-to-do, wealthy, important." Rabbi Shim'on, however, expands the meaning.

On the phrase עקרא דביתא (*iqqara de-veita*), "essence of the house, mistress of the house," see Psalms 113:9; *Bereshit Rabbah* 71:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 20:2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayetse* 15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:8, 11; *Zohar* 1:29a–b, 50a, 149b, 154a, 157b, 158b, 223a; Moses de León, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 44.

5. **other women, upon seeing a guest…** See BT *Bava Metsi'a* 87a, in the name of Rabbi Yitsḥak: "A woman looks with a more grudging eye upon guests than a man."

6. **How did she know?…** Rabbi Shim’on combines two separate opinions reported in BT *Berakhot* 10b: “*A holy man*. How did she know? Rav and Shemu’el. One said, ‘Because she never saw a fly pass over his table.’ The other said, ‘She spread סדין (*sadin*), a sheet, of linen on his bed and never saw a [nocturnal] seminal emission on it.’

According to M *Avot* 5:5, ten wonders occurred in the Temple in Jerusalem, including the following: “No fly was seen in the slaughtering place, and the high priest never experienced a seminal emission on Yom Kippur.”

Here “sheet” renders שושיפא (*shushifa*), “garment, cloak, mantle, towel.” See *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 38:18; Deuteronomy 22:17; *Targum Yonatan*, Isaiah 3:22; Naḥmanides on Genesis 38:18; *Zohar* 2:99a. For the association of *shushifa* (Elijah’s “mantle”) with Elisha, see *Targum Yonatan*, 1 Kings 19:19; 2 Kings 2:8, 13–14.

7. **there are many such people…** Who have no nocturnal seminal emissions.

8. **they have spoken well…** The subject is the Companions quoted in the Talmud (see above, note 6). Having realized Elisha’s unique nature, the Shunammite woman concludes that he should seclude himself from other people in order to maintain his high level of holiness. However, instead of having him leave the house, she prepares a separate space for him there, furnished with symbols of *Shekhinah* (who is known as Assembly of Israel).

On the paradisial fragrance of holy individuals, see *Zohar* 2:127b. Cf. above, pp. 187–91. On these four pieces of furniture as symbolizing the array of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 2:133a–b. On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18. The verse in Kings concludes: *so that whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there*.

9. **these do not match the order…** An arriving guest first needs to sit down, then eat at a table, then have a lamp in the evening, and finally go to bed. Here, however, the Shunammite woman placed the bed first, perhaps because

she had discovered Elisha's holiness while making his bed (see above at notes 6–8).

On placing first what is most precious, see BT *Yevamot* 30a. "To her (that was most precious)" renders עלה (*alah*), following T1. Other manuscripts and the printed editions read עליה (*aleih*), "to him," apparently referring to the guest (or specifically to Elisha), who—tired from his journey—would find a bed "most precious of all." See Baḥya ben Asher, *Kad ha-Qemaḥ*, s.v. *orḥim*, 37; *OY*; Vital; Galante; *Nefesh David*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

10. ***One day…*** Literally, *It happened on the day*. According to Rabbi Shim'on, *the day* on which Elisha visited the Shunammite woman was Rosh Hashanah, the fateful Day of Judgment. This identification is modeled on a rabbinic interpretation of the identical phrase in Job 1:6.

On *the day* in Job as Rosh Hashanah, see *Targum Yonatan* on the verse; *Midrash Iyyov* 1:6 (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:158); Rashi and Ibn Ezra on the verse; *Zohar* 2:32b; 3:231a; *ZḤ* 20b (*MhN*). For the same interpretation of the phrase in Kings, see *Zohar* 1:69b, 160b; 2:32b; 3:231a.

According to a rabbinic tradition, the barren women Sarah, Rachel, and Hannah were all "remembered" on Rosh Hashanah and made fertile. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 73:1; BT *Berakhot* 29a, *Rosh Hashanah* 10b–11a; *Tanḥuma, Vayera* 17. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 53:8; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 22:1; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 42.

The verse in Kings concludes: *he turned in to the upper chamber and lay down there*.

11. ***You have gone to all this trouble…*** According to Rabbi Shim'on, Elisha is offering to intercede not with the Israelite king but with the divine King and Judge on Rosh Hashanah (the Day of Judgment), both for the world's sake and for the sake of the Shunammite woman, seeking forgiveness for any of her misdeeds. She, after all, had gone to the trouble of providing Elisha with a room for seclusion.

In the daily *Amidah* recited between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the formula "King who loves righteousness and justice" is changed to "King of Justice." See BT *Berakhot* 12b; *Zohar* 1:160b.

12. ***Among my own people I dwell…*** When Judgment looms, a person should not make himself conspicuous and vulnerable to accusation.

See *Zohar* 1:69b, 160b; 2:33b; *ZḤ* 77a (*MhN, Rut*). See BT *Berakhot* 49b, in the name of Samuel: "A person should never exclude himself from the entire community." Cf. ibid. 30a; and M *Avot* 2:4, in the name of Hillel: "Do not separate yourself from the community."

The clause "as I have acted until today" means "just as I have not separated from them until today." See above, p. 145 at n. 26; *Nefesh David*.

13. ***Gehazi…*** Elisha's servant.

14. **the time is auspicious…** Elisha realizes that this day of Rosh Hashanah is an auspicious time for barren women to become fertile. (See above, note 10.) He predicts that the Shunammite woman will give birth precisely one year later: למועד הזה (*la-mo'ed ha-zeh*), *at this season*, which is understood to mean *at this festival*, namely Rosh Hashanah.

15. **Later, he died…** The son born to the Shunammite died. See 2 Kings 4:18–20. According to Rabbi Shim'on, he died because he derived (via his mother) from *Shekhinah*, the divine female, who is associated with death.

Whereas the Tree of Life symbolizes *Tif'eret, Shekhinah* is a tree linked with death. This last symbol derives from *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 5, where the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is called the Tree of Death, because when Adam and Eve ate of its fruit, death ensued. See Genesis 2:17. In Kabbalah, *Shekhinah* is identified with the Tree of Knowledge. When She is united with *Tif'eret*, She conveys life to the world; but if She is separated from Him by human sin, the vivifying flow of emanation ceases and death dominates.

See *Zohar* 1:12b, 35b–36a, 51a–52a, 53b, 208b–209a, 246a; 3:157a. Cf. 2:101a–b, 103b; Vital.

16. **Of Abraham… *to you*…** When the divine messenger announced to Abraham that Sarah would give birth to a son, he specified *to you*, implying that this son (Isaac) would be linked to Abraham, not to Sarah—deriving from the Tree of Life, not the Tree of Death.

The verse in Genesis continues: *and look, Sarah your wife will have a son!* The expression *awaits his every step* derives from Isaiah 41:2.

17. **there she had seen…** See above at notes 6–8.

18. ***Are you all right?…*** Elisha's words to the Shunammite woman, conveyed by his servant, Gehazi. According to Rabbi Shim'on, the fact that Elisha inquires first about her, before her husband, indicates that she was the dominant figure in the house. This is indicated further by the fact that she, rather than her husband, came to Elisha.

"Mainstay" renders עקרא (*iqqara*), "essence, mistress." See above, note 4.

19. ***The man of God…*** Why is Elisha called by this title when he is on Mount Carmel, whereas in the city he is called simply by his name? Because when he is secluded on the mountain, Elisha is able to contact *Shekhinah*, known as *Elohim, God*; here, he becomes איש האלהים (*ish ha-Elohim*), *the man* [or: *husband*] *of Shekhinah*. See above, note 3; p. 74 and n. 17.

On Elisha and "the sons (or disciples) of the prophets," see, e.g., 2 Kings 2:3–5; 4:1, 38. The full verse here reads: *She came to the man of God on the mountain and she grasped his feet. Gehazi approached to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her alone, for her soul is bitter within her; and YHVH has hidden it from me and has not told me."*

20. ***YHVH has hidden it…*** God had not foretold the child's death to Elisha because the latter had prophesied

the child's birth and, being so intimately involved with the boy, he would use his powers to keep him alive. Yet, God knew that the child was destined to die. See above, note 15.

21. **miracle vanished from him** Initially, Elisha sent Gehazi to revive the child with the prophet's staff. According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 33, Gehazi doubted that such a miracle could occur and consequently he did not succeed. See 2 Kings 4:31.

22. **Why, since Gehazi was already going?...** Why did the Shunammite woman urge Elisha to go to the child himself, since Gehazi was already on his way?

On Gehazi's unworthiness, see 2 Kings 5 (where he is portrayed as greedy, cunning, and deceptive); M *Sanhedrin* 10:2; JT *Yevamot* 2:4, 3d; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 16:4; 24:6; BT *Berakhot* 10b, *Sanhedrin* 100a, 107b; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 14.

23. ***He placed his mouth...*** The full verse reads: *He mounted* [the bed] *and lay upon the child, and he placed his mouth upon his mouth, his eyes upon his eyes, and his palms upon his palms; he bent over him, and the flesh of the child became warm*.

Rabbi Shim'on explains that Elisha was unable to uproot the child from the site of *Shekhinah*, which had caused his death. (See above, note 15.) Instead, he drew down the animating power of *Tif'eret* (the Tree of Life), which joined *Shekhinah*, thereby reviving the boy.

24. ***The boy sneezed...*** The verse concludes: *and the boy opened his eyes*. His seven sneezes signified that he would live for seventy years, which symbolize the seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*. If the boy had ascended any farther than *Ḥesed*, he would have lived much longer.

See *Zohar* 1:124a, 217b. The verse in Psalms continues: *or with strength, eighty years; their pride is toil and sorrow*.

25. **This was the prophet חבקוק (*Ḥavaqquq*), Habakkuk...** The son of the Shunammite woman was none other than this prophet, as implied by Elisha's prediction:

you חובקת (*ḥoveqet*), *will be embracing, a son*. But why, then, wasn't he named simply חבוק (*Ḥavuq*), Embraced? Rabbi Shim'on explains that the double form *Ḥavaqquq* alludes to two embraces: one by the boy's mother, symbolizing *Shekhinah* (to whom he was linked at first), and one by Elisha when he revived him by linking him with higher rungs.

The identification of the child with Habakkuk explains why Rabbi Shim'on opened his discourse with *A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet*, and then began discussing the story of Elisha and the Shunammite. See above at notes 1–4. On this identification, see Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, *Rimzei Haftarot* for *Shavu'ot*; *Zohar* 1:7b; 3:195a; Baḥya ben Asher, *Kad ha-Qemaḥ*, s.v. *orḥim*, 37; Scholem.

26. **Why תפלה (*tefillah*), *a prayer*?...** One of the many names of *Shekhinah*, who receives human prayer and conveys it above. She is symbolized by one of the תפלין (*tefillin*), "phylacteries,"—specifically the *tefillah*, "phylactery," of the hand; whereas Her partner *Tif'eret* is symbolized by the *tefillah* of the head.

27. **שגיונות (*shigyonot*)...** As indicated above (note 1), this rare word is probably a literary or musical term, whose precise meaning is unknown. Here, it is understood as "mistakes," based on the similar-sounding שגגה (*shegagah*) or שגיאה (*shegi'ah*), "mistake, inadvertent sin." On Rosh Hashanah, when Habakkuk was born (see above, note 14) and bound to *Shekhinah*, the sins of the world were being judged by God, and the quality of *Gevurah* or *Din* (Judgment) prevailed. *Shekhinah* is associated with *Gevurah*, the left hand of God, and Her symbol—the *tefillah* (phylactery) of the hand—is bound on the left hand. Now this *tefillah* was bound to Habakkuk, the son of the Shunammite.

See *Targum Yonatan*, Habakkuk 3:1; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 12; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:2; BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 16b, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *shiggayon*; *Midrash Tehillim* 7:3, 17; 90:7; Rashi on Habakkuk 3:1, Psalms 7:1; Radak on Habakkuk 3:1.

28. ***I have heard of Your renown…*** Habakkuk's prophetic inspiration was revealed through *Shekhinah*, who is known as *prayer*. Having experienced death through being linked to *Shekhinah*, Habakkuk was naturally afraid.

A similar parable is quoted by Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi in *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:1: "One who has been bitten by a snake is frightened by a rope."

On Habakkuk and this verse, see *Bahir* 46–49, 51 (68–72, 76–77); *Zohar* 1:7b; 3:128a (*IR*), 138b (*IR*); Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 34–35.

29. **Who is *Your deed*?…** Habakkuk himself is God's *deed*, having been revived miraculously. He prays that God will extend life to him from the *sefirot*, which are known as "supernal *years*."

30. **Why *shigyonot*?…** Why this rare term and not the normal word שגיאות (*shegi'ot*), *errors*? (See above, note 27.) Rabbi Shim'on explains that *shigyonot* includes the sense of *shegi'ot*—"it is all"—but also conveys the (possible) technical meaning of *shiggayon*: a musical instrument (see above, note 1). Such instruments induced a spirit of prophecy. Moreover, Habakkuk, who had undergone the trauma of death and been frightened by divine revelation, needed the calming effects of music. *Shekhinah* too ("that place"), who is linked with Judgment, needed to be sweetened by music.

Unlike other prophets, Moses required no special preparations but could attain the Holy Spirit whenever he wished. See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 7:4–6; idem, *Commentary on the Mishnah, Sanhedrin* 10:1:7. Cf. *Sifrei*, Numbers 68.

The verse in Samuel (spoken by Samuel to the newly anointed King Saul) reads: *There, as you enter the town, you will encounter a band of prophets coming down from the high place, preceded by harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre, and they will be prophesying*.

The verse in Kings, describing how Elisha sought divine inspiration, concludes: *And as the minstrel was playing, the*

hand of YHVH came upon him. See 1 Chronicles 25:1, and Rashi, ad loc.; JT *Sukkah* 5:1, 55a; BT *Shabbat* 30b, *Pesaḥim* 117a; *Midrash Tehillim* 24:3; *Zohar* 1:180b, 216b.

31. **all those legions and chariots…** The angels accompanying *Shekhinah* as She led the Israelites out of Egypt.

Generally the sound of the angels' singing is unbearable. See BT *Sanhedrin* 95b, where Rabbi Yitsḥak the Smith explains how God killed Sennacherib's troops: "He uncovered their ears, and they heard the song from the mouths of the *ḥayyot* [angelic "living beings" carrying the divine throne] and they died."

On souls "flying away" due to the power of revelation, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 6:3–4 (on 5:16); *Shemot Rabbah* 29:4; *Midrash Tehillim* 68:5. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 88b.

32. **they tasted the taste of death…** Having just escaped harsh bondage. Similarly (if more literally), Habakkuk tasted death. As Israel's spirits were calmed, so was Habakkuk's spirit (see above at note 30).

The full verse in Exodus reads: *YHVH was going before them by day in a column of cloud to lead them on the way, and by night in a column of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and by night*.

On this verse, see *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ, Petiḥta; Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 13:21; *Zohar* 1:176b; *ZḤ* 72a (*ShS*). On the healing fragrance, cf. BT *Shabbat* 88b.

33. **Pharaoh…to escort them…** According to a rabbinic interpretation, the expression *when Pharaoh sent the people off* refers to his escorting the Israelites out of Egypt. Here Rabbi Shim'on adds that the heavenly princes appointed over Egypt and other nations joined in the escort.

See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ, Petiḥta*; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 1; *Shemot Rabbah* 20:3; *Zohar* 1:82b. "To escort" renders לאוזפא (*le-ozapha*), which in normal Aramaic means "to lend"; but the equivalent Hebrew term, להלוות (*le-halvot*), "to lend," is

a homonym of *le-halvot*, “to escort,” and the author(s) of the *Zohar*—either playfully or mistakenly—employ(s) *le-ozapha* in this sense. Cf. the English idiom “to lend an escort.” See above, pp. 68–69, n. 301.

On Etham, see Exodus 13:20; *Targum Onqelos*, ad loc. The full verse here reads: *It happened when Pharaoh sent the people off that God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, though* [or: *because*] *it was close, for God said, ‘Lest the people regret when they see battle, and return to Egypt.’*

34. ***because it was close…*** כי קרוב הוא (*Ki qarov hu*). The clause is often translated *though it was close* (see the end of the preceding note), but here Rabbi Shim’on insists on the meaning *because it was close*, alluding to the oath administered to Abraham by Abimelech, king of the Philistines in Gerar. (Cf. the similar pact between Abimelech and Isaac in Genesis 26:26–31.) This pact of mutual nonaggression was still *close* in time and still binding; therefore, *God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines*, which would have involved fighting with Abimelech’s descendants.

See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ, Petiḥta*; *Bereshit Rabbah* 54:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:9; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:1. The verse in Genesis 21 begins: *Now swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my son and grandson*.

35. ***Pharaoh rose at night…*** The verse concludes: *and all Egypt, and there was a great outcry in Egypt, for there was no house without someone dead*.

36. **firstborn passed through Egypt and killed…** According to a midrashic interpretation, the Egyptian firstborn tried to convince their fathers and then Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. Rebuffed, they drew their swords and killed their fathers.

See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bo* 18; *Midrash Tehillim* 136:6.

37. **when Pharaoh saw the plague…** When he saw that all the Egyptian firstborn were killed, he lashed out at his commanders and officers and all those who had advised him to refuse to let the Israelites go.

The verse in Exodus reads literally, *Pharaoh rose* לילה (*lailah*), *night*. This last word functions adverbially to mean *at night*, but here Rabbi Shim'on emphasizes the hyperliteral nominal sense: *night*, alluding to *Shekhinah*, who is known by this name. Just as She wreaked divine vengeance upon Egypt, so did Pharaoh himself. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 134.

38. **Similarly, Pharaoh** Killed his officers.

39. ***Rise, go out…*** The full verse reads: *He called to Moses and to Aaron* לילה (*lailah*), *at night, and said, "Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the Children of Israel! Go worship YHVH as you have spoken*." As above (at note 37), Rabbi Shim'on reads the word *lailah* hyperliterally: *night*, alluding to *Shekhinah*, who wreaked vengeance. Thus Pharaoh exclaimed to Moses and Aaron, *"Night!"*—i.e., "You have acted like *night*, delivering the vengeance of *Shekhinah*, killing my people."

On Pharaoh's escorting the Israelites, see above, note 33. The clause "because everything happened through your power" may be linked with the preceding quotation (*He called to Moses and to Aaron, "Night!"*) or to the following one (*Bless me too!*), or to both.

40. **pave the way to His place** Leading the Israelites to the Red Sea, where a miracle awaited them.

41. **Why this difference?…** Why did God call the Israelites lovingly *My people* and *My son* even before they were initiated into the covenant of circumcision, whereas when they went out of Egypt, having just been circumcised, Scripture refers to them simply as *the people* (Exodus 13:18), with no reference to God?

On the circumcision of the Israelites in Egypt, see above, p. 161, n. 74.

42. **mixed multitude…** According to Exodus 12:38, when the Israelites left Egypt, *a mixed multitude also went up with them*. Rabbi Yehudah explains that since this motley throng intermingled with the Israelites, Exodus 13:18 employs the nonspecific wording *the people*.

According to rabbinic tradition, the mixed multitude of non-Israelites initiated the sinful worship of the Golden Calf. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:8; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:7–8; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 21, 30; *Emor* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 15; *Shemot Rabbah* 42:6; *Zohar* 2:191a.

The phrase "similarly all of them" refers hyperbolically to all biblical instances of the expression *the people*. See *Tanḥuma, Balaq* 17; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Balaq* 26; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 20:23.

Exodus 32:1 reads in full: *The people saw that Moses lagged in coming down from the mountain, and the people assembled against Aaron and said to him, "Rise up, make us gods that will go before us, for this man Moses who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him."*

43. **caravanner** טייעא (*Tayya'a*), "Arab," Arab caravanner, derived from the name of the Arabian tribe *Tayyi'*. The prophet Elijah returns to earth as a *tayya'a* in BT *Berakhot* 6b, and as an ערבי (*aravi*), "Arab," in *Rut Zuta* 1:20; 4:11. See *Rosh ha-Shanah* 26b; *Yevamot* 120b; *Bava Batra* 73b; *Sanhedrin* 110a; *Ḥullin* 7a.

In the *Zohar, tayya'a* usually indicates one of several wandering donkey-drivers encountered by the Companions on the road. See 1:5b; 2:94b–114a, 145b, 155b–157a; 3:21a–23a, 186b; *ZḤ* 83a–d (*MhN, Rut*); *TZ* 23, 69a. Cf. *Tosefta Ḥagigah* 2:1 (JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77a; BT *Ḥagigah* 14b); BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 25a–b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 32:10; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:3; Steinschneider, *Polemische und apologetische Literatur*, 248–54; Pushinski, "Le-Ḥeqer Sefat ha-Zohar"; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 165, 388, n. 46; idem, *Kabbalah*, 227.

44. **string…** קטירא (*Qetira*), derived from Arabic *qitar*, “train of camels.” See Galante.

45. **burdens wrapped in their blankets** בקטפייהו עטפורא (*Atpora be-qatpaihu*). The first word apparently derives from the root עטף (*atf*), “to wrap.” The second word probably derives from Arabic *qatifa*, “cloak, blanket.”

Later scribes and editors, perplexed by the rare form בקטפייהו (*be-qatpaihu*), emended the word to the more familiar term בכתפייהו (*be-katpaihu*), “on their shoulders.”

For the meaning “cloak,” see *Zohar* 3:19a; *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *qtf*; *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, s.v. *atifa*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *qitpoi*. Cf. *DE*; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *atufira*.

46. **mounted her** אתא עלה (*Ata alah*), “came upon her, cohabited with her.” For the corresponding Hebrew idiom, see Genesis 19:31; Deuteronomy 25:5.

47. **of blemished seed** Conceived illegitimately.

48. **במרעים (*ba-mere’im*), *by evildoers…*** Rabbi Yitsḥak interprets the word *mere’im* in a causative sense: “those who bring evil.”

The verse in Psalms concludes: *do not be incensed by those who do wrong*.

49. **Were it not for that mixed multitude…** If that motley throng had not mingled with the Israelites as they left Egypt, the sin of the Golden Calf would never have been committed (see above, note 42) and all those Israelites would not have perished at the hands of the Levites and in the ensuing plague (Exodus 32:26–29, 35).

According to rabbinic tradition, all of Israel’s subsequent suffering, including the destruction of the Temple and their exile, is partly a retribution for this sin. See BT *Sanhedrin* 102a; *Zohar* 1:228a; 2:191a.

50. **wanted Israel to become like supernal angels…** Upon receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai, the Israelites could have become angelic and immortal; but

once they participated in the sin of the Golden Calf, they doomed themselves.

The verse in Exodus describes the tablets given to Moses on Mount Sinai: *The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved upon the tablets. See Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:3: *"Engraved upon the tablets*. Do not read חרות (*ḥarut*), *engraved*, but rather חירות (*ḥeirut*), *freedom*. Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Neḥemiah, and the Rabbis: Rabbi Yehudah said, 'Freedom from the Angel of Death.' Rabbi Neḥemiah said, 'Freedom from kingdoms.' The Rabbis said, 'Freedom from suffering.'"

See *Avot* 6:2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:6; BT *Eruvin* 54a; *Zohar* 1:37b, 63b, 131b–132a, 152b; 2:113b–114a, 183a; 3:6b, 176a. On Israel's becoming like angels, see *Tanḥuma, Eqev* 8; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 47; cf. BT *Avodah Zarah* 5a. On the smashing of the tablets, see Exodus 32:19.

51. **Here too... *the people*—unidentified...** Exodus 13:18 reads: *God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea*. The nonspecific wording *the people* indicates the presence of the mixed multitude. See above, notes 41–42. It might be objected that the continuation of the verse does identify the people: *The Children of Israel went up armed from the land of Egypt*. However, Rabbi Yehudah explains that this refers to the very beginning of the Exodus, when the mixed multitude had not yet joined the Israelites.

52. ***For as you see...*** The verse records Moses' declaration to the Israelites at the Red Sea: *Do not be afraid. Stand firm and see YHVH's deliverance that He will perform for you today, for as you see the Egyptians today, you will not see them again forever*. Rabbi Yose, assuming that the mixed multitude consisted of Egyptians, sees a contradiction between Moses' promise and the fact that the Israelites encountered the mixed multitude constantly in the wilderness.

On the mixed multitude being Egyptians, see Ibn Ezra (short and long) on Exodus 12:38; *Zohar* 2:191a.

53. ***a mixed multitude*, not *Egyptians*...** Rabbi Yehudah explains that the mixed multitude consisted of other nationalities residing (or enslaved) in Egypt. Furthermore, even if they had been Egyptians, they were all circumcised at Moses' command and consequently would no longer be considered Egyptian.

According to a midrashic interpretation, when God said to Moses, *Your people that you brought up from the land of Egypt has acted corruptly,* He was referring to the mixed multitude, whom Moses had converted against God's advice. See *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 21, 30; *Shemot Rabbah* 42:6; Rashi on Exodus 32:7; Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 31:18; *Zohar* 1:25a (*TZ*); 3:276b (*RM*); *TZ* 13, 28b; above, note 42.

The verse in Exodus 12 reads: *A mixed multitude also went up with them*. The context in Exodus 32 (7–8) reads: *YHVH said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people that you brought up from the land of Egypt has acted corruptly. They have swerved quickly from the way that I commanded them. They have made themselves a molten calf and bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!'"*

54. **חמשים (*ḥamushim*), *armed*...** The word means "armed" or "lined up for war" (perhaps, "arrayed in groups of fifty"). In Exodus, it is spelled without a ו (*vav*), facilitating midrashic interpretations based on חמשה (*ḥamishah*), "five," and חמשים (*ḥamishim*), "fifty." According to rabbinic sources, the Israelites who left Egypt represented only a fraction (one-fifth, one-fiftieth, one five-hundredth) of the total number of Israelites who had been enslaved; the rest died during the plague of darkness.

Here "they were one out of חמשה (*ḥamishah*), five" apparently means that the Israelites constituted one-fifth of those who left Egypt, while the other four-fifths consisted of

the mixed multitude. Rabbi Yose offers a different interpretation: five-sixths of those departing were Israelites, and one-sixth were the mixed multitude. According to Rabbi Yehudah, one-fiftieth were Israelites, and all the rest were the mixed multitude.

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 12; *Beshallaḥ, Petiḥta; Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 13:18; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 1; Rashi on Exodus 13:18; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 13:18, n. 260. On the immense number of the mixed multitude, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 12:38. For various interpretations of the passage here, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

55. **חמשים (*ḥamushim*)—through that Jubilee…** For Rabbi Shim'on, the deficient spelling of חמשים (*ḥamushim*)—without the ו (*vav*)—alludes to the Jubilee, which comes every חמשים (*ḥamishim*), "fifty," years and symbolizes *Binah*.

According to the Bible, every seventh year is a Sabbatical, during which the land must lie fallow and at the end of which all debts are remitted (Leviticus 25:1–24; Deuteronomy 15:1–3). After seven Sabbaticals, in the fiftieth year, comes the Jubilee, when slaves are released and land reverts to its original owner (Leviticus 25:8–55). In Kabbalah the Jubilee symbolizes *Binah*, who in general is characterized by the number fifty, based on BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, where Rav and Shemu'el teach: "Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)." As Jubilee, *Binah* is the source of liberation, including the liberation from Egyptian bondage.

Appropriately, the Israelites journeyed for fifty days before receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai. Torah symbolizes *Tif'eret*, which issues from the site of *Binah*.

On *Binah* and the Exodus, see above, p. 90 and n. 77, p. 192 and n. 186; *Zohar* 1:21b; 2:68a, 83b, 85a–b, 121b; 3:262a. On the fifty days from Exodus to Sinai, see *Zohar*

2:83b; 3:262a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 138–39, 328. On Torah issuing from *Binah*, see *Zohar* 2:85a.

56. ***Moses took the bones…*** The verse continues: *for he* [Joseph] *had solemnly made the children of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely take notice of you, and you shall take up my bones from here with you."* See Genesis 50:25.

Since Joseph was the first to descend into Egyptian exile, at the Exodus Moses recovered his bones and brought them out of Egypt. Furthermore, Joseph had conveyed a sign of redemption to his brothers by telling them that God פקד יפקד (*paqod yifqod*), *will surely take notice, of you* (Genesis 50:25; Exodus 13:19). When Moses used this formula in God's name—פקד פקדתי (*paqod paqadti*), *I have surely taken notice, of you* (Exodus 3:16)—it became clear that redemption was imminent.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 97(98):6 *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 48; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 24; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemot* 21; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:8; 5:2; Rashi and Naḥmanides on Exodus 3:18.

57. ***YHVH was going before them by day…*** The verse concludes: *in a column of cloud to lead them on the way, and by night in a column of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and by night.*

58. ***Meditate on it day and night…*** The full verse in Joshua reads: *Let not this book of Torah depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will succeed*.

On the verse in Jeremiah, see BT *Pesaḥim* 68b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Were it not for Torah [which must be studied day and night], heaven and earth would not endure, as is said: *Were it not for My covenant day and night, I would not have established the laws of heaven and earth*."

See BT *Shabbat* 33a, *Nedarim* 32a, *Sanhedrin* 99b, *Avodah Zarah* 3a; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 18; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 16; *Tanḥuma, Noaḥ* 3, *Ha'azinu* 3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21; *Shemot Rabbah* 47:4.

59. **why by night?...** Because day symbolizes *Tif'eret*, and night symbolizes *Shekhinah*. By studying Torah day and night, one unifies the divine couple, who constitute the divine name. See BT *Tamid* 32b.

60. **at midnight the blessed Holy One enters...** God delights each night with the souls of the righteous in the Garden of Eden, and both He and these *companions* (the souls) listen to those who rise at midnight to study Torah. The voices of those studying below join with the voice of *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel), who is praising Her partner, *Tif'eret* (known as the blessed Holy One).

The verse from Song of Songs is applied to the study of Torah in BT *Shabbat* 63a: "Rabbi Abba said in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish, 'When two disciples of the wise listen to one another in *halakhah*, the blessed Holy One listens to their voice, as is said: *You who dwell in the gardens, companions listen for your voice; let me hear!*'"

See Rashi, ad loc.; *Zohar* 1:77b, 92a, 178b, 207b, 231a–b; 2:18b (*MhN*); 3:13a, 22a, 213a; *OY*; *MM*. On the midnight ritual of studying Torah, see above, pp. 167–68, n. 99. On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18.

61. **As morning approaches...** *Shekhinah*, who prevails at night, comes toward Her divine partner, who dominates during the day. The "scepter of חסד (*ḥesed*), love" apparently symbolizes *Yesod*, who conveys the emanation from *Ḥesed* to *Shekhinah*, and through Her to those who engaged in Torah from midnight.

See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b: "Resh Lakish said, 'To one who engages in Torah by night, the blessed Holy One extends a thread of love by day, as is said: *By day YHVH directs His love*.

Why? Because *in the night His song is with me.'" His song* is the song of Torah.

See *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 13; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Talmud Torah* 3:13; *Zohar* 1:82b, 92a, 194b, 178b, 194b, 207b; 2:18b (*MhN*), 149a; 3:36a, 44b–45a, 65a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 54.

On *Shekhinah* as doe, see *Zohar* 1:4a; 2:7b, 8b, 10a–b, 36b, 52b, 56b, 119b (*RM*), 219b; 3:21b, 25b, 68a, 249a–b. On the erotic connotation of the doe in the context of studying Torah, see BT *Eruvin* 54b; cf. Vital.

62. **As morning is about to lighten…** The darkest hour precedes the dawn. Darkness and night symbolize *Shekhinah*, who is tinged with Judgment, whereas *Tif'eret* is symbolized by sun and daylight. At dawn, darkness and light merge, as couples (both human and divine) unite. At day's end, the sun illumines the western sky, symbolizing the beginning of *Shekhinah*'s dominion. Yet, this is also the time when the flow from above is interrupted ("all gates are closed") and demonic forces (symbolized by donkeys and dogs) arouse—until midnight, when the King comes to His Queen.

Several elements of this imagery derive from BT *Berakhot* 3a, in the name of Rabbi Eli'ezer: "In the first watch [of the night], a donkey brays; in the second, dogs bark; in the third, a child sucks from its mother's breast, and a woman converses with her husband." On the erotic connotation of "converses," see BT *Nedarim* 20b, and pseudo-Rashi, ad loc. See *Zohar* 1:178a.

מטרוניתא (*Matronita*) is an aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron, married woman, noble lady," and is often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the Queen. On the verse in Song of Songs, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; *Zohar* 1:112a, 140b; 2:12a; 3:95a, 233a.

63. **all those in the palace of *Matronita*…** The faithful who draw near Her. Their earthly praise and study—linking

this world with heaven—are more precious to God than the praises of the angels and of the souls of the righteous.

64. **King and *Matronita* dwell in secrecy…** Intimately.

On the presents for those dwelling in the palace, see *Zohar* 1:8a.

65. ***And YHVH…*** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 51:2, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Wherever it is said *And YHVH*, this implies: He and His court." In Kabbalah this court symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who derives from *Din* (Judgment) and pronounces the divine decree, so the phrase *And YHVH* encompasses "He [the divine male, known as *YHVH*] and His court [*Shekhinah*]."

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 21; *Shemot Rabbah* 12:4; Rashi on Exodus 12:29; Naḥmanides on Exodus 13:21; *Zohar* 1:15b, 64b, 105a, 107b, 159b, 192b, 198a, 240a; 2:37b, 227b; 3:149a. Cf. 3:191b. The hermeneutical significance of *and* was championed by Rabbi Akiva. See BT *Yevamot* 68b, *Sanhedrin* 51b.

For the full verse in Exodus 13, see above, note 57.

66. ***Shekhinah* journeyed along with the patriarchs…** She led the Israelites out of Egypt, accompanied by the patriarchs and by King David. Thus the patriarchs witnessed the redemption of their descendants.

Abraham symbolizes the light of *Ḥesed*, first of the seven lower *sefirot*, the primal "days" of Creation. See *Zohar* 1:141b. Isaac symbolizes *Gevurah*, linked with cloudy darkness. See 3:150b. Jacob symbolizes *Tif'eret*, the *way* that mediates between *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. King David symbolizes *Shekhinah* (called *night*), who is linked with the fire of *Gevurah*. Together these four *sefirot* constitute a chariot-throne for the highest level of divinity. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6: "Resh Lakish said, 'The patriarchs themselves constitute the Chariot.'"

See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 57; *Zohar* 1:60b, 99a, 150a, 154b, 173b, 186a, 222b, 223b–224a,

248b; 2:23b, 31b, 53a, 144a; 3:38a, 99a, 146a, 182a, 262b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 342; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 239–40. On David as the fourth component of the divine chariot, see Vol. 3, p. 134, n. 311. On *Shekhinah* journeying with the patriarchs, see *Zohar* 2:51b; 3:25a.

67. **so that consummation of all would appear…** By journeying day and night, the Israelites stimulated the union of *Tif'eret* (symbolized by day) and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by night). See above, note 59.

68. **Jubilee…** *Binah*, the source of liberation, who is also symbolized by the shofar that proclaims redemption. Corresponding to the fifty years of the Jubilee, fifty days elapsed from the Exodus to the revelation of Torah at Mount Sinai.

See above, note 55. According to midrashic sources, Israel journeyed comfortably through the wilderness, surrounded by seven clouds of glory. See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ, Petiḥta; Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 13:21; *Sifrei*, Numbers 83; *Tosefta Sotah* 4:2; *Baraita di-Mlekhet ha-Mishkan* 14; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 3, 10; *Bemidbar* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bemidbar* 2.

The verse in Isaiah concludes: *and those who were lost in the land of Assyria and those who were scattered in the land of Egypt will come and worship YHVH on the holy mountain in Jerusalem*.

69. **day and night being called *one day*…** As in Genesis 1:5: *There was evening, there was morning: one day*. See BT *Nazir* 7a.

70. **from the aspect of Jubilee Torah was given to them…** Torah symbolizes *Tif'eret*, which issues from *Binah*. See above, note 55.

71. ***By day*…** Abraham symbolizes *Ḥesed*, associated with *day* and with the *cloud* that protected Israel. Isaac symbolizes *Gevurah*, associated with *fire*. Jacob inhabits the realm of *Tif'eret*, identified with the name *YHVH* (at the

beginning of the verse). *Shekhinah*, symbolized by *night*, was illumined by both *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*.

See *Zohar* 2:51b. Cf. above, note 66. For the full verse in Exodus 13, see above, note 57.

72. ***his eyes were too dim to see…*** The verse introduces the story of Isaac seeking to bless Esau. According to *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:5–6, "Because he justified the wicked [i.e., because Isaac loved and favored Esau], his eyes grew dim."

Here Rabbi Abba adds a kabbalistic twist: the darkness of night (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) mingled with Isaac (symbolizing *Gevurah*), thereby dimming his vision.

See *Zohar* 1:16a. On Isaac's love for Esau, see Genesis 25:28. The verse in Genesis 27 concludes: *and he called Esau, his elder son, and said to him, "My son!" He answered, "Here I am."*

73. **Who told him?…** See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:5.

74. **And why did they say this?…** On the Israelites moving day and night, see above at note 67. Here, Israel's "turning back" is interpreted as a devious ploy.

75. ***He took six hundred chariots…*** One chariot for every thousand male Israelites.

See *ZḤ* 71c (*ShS*). On the ratio of one to a thousand, see Deuteronomy 32:30; Joshua 23:10; 1 Chronicles 12:15.

The full verse in Exodus 14 reads: *He took six hundred select chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over it all* [or: *and teams-of-three upon them all*]. The verse in Exodus 12 concludes:—*the men, besides little ones*.

76. ***Select*—corresponding to *the men*…** The finest chariots corresponded to the male Israelites.

77. ***besides little ones…*** The verse reads:… *about six hundred thousand on foot—the men, besides little ones*.

78. **ושלישים (*Ve-shalishim*)…** The technical term שלישׁ (*shalish*) apparently derives from שלשׁ (*shalosh*), "three," and its plain meaning may be "third man in the chariot" or "team-

of-three," or else simply "officer, captain." Here Rabbi Yose focuses on the numerical sense, indicating that Pharaoh arranged the chariots triadically so that they would correspond to the triadic structure of the *sefirot*, in which *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* are mediated by *Tif'eret*; *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, by *Yesod*.

Cf. *Zohar* 2:56b; *ZḤ* 71c (*ShS*).

79. **According to its translation…** Rabbi Yitsḥak offers a different interpretation of the term שלישים (*shalishim*), based on an Aramaic rendering in *Targum Onqelos*. Actually, here *Targum Onqelos* renders *shalishim* as גיברין (*gibbarin*), "warriors." The Aramaic translation מזרזין (*mezarezin*), "armed," appears in *Targum Onqelos*, Exodus 13:18, rendering another (apparently numerical) term: חמושים (*ḥamushim*). See above, note 54. The substitution of the Aramaic rendering of *ḥamushim* for that of *shalishim* is the result of either confusion or—more likely—playfulness. Playing further, Rabbi Yitsḥak associates *mezarezin* with זריזין (*zerizin*), "swift, diligent, scrupulous, zealous."

80. ***I will punish…*** Each earthly nation has a heavenly prince, whose fate determines that of his nation below.

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:14; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:22; *Tanḥuma, Bo* 4, *Beshallaḥ* 13, *Mishpatim* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bo* 6, 19; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:9; 21:5; 23:15; *Zohar* 1:69a, 86a; 2:6b–7a, 18a–b (*MhN*), 29a, 49a, 54b, 175a, 232b; 3:147a.

On the heavenly princes, see above, p. 19, n. 71. The verse in Isaiah reads: *YHVH will punish the host of the heights…*

81. ***He took six hundred select chariots*—their empowered one…** The heavenly prince of Egypt led six hundred heavenly princes of other nations (*select chariots*) against the Israelites. At the Red Sea, the heavenly prince of Egypt was defeated; the other nations' princes were defeated later, when Deborah and Barak conquered Sisera the Canaanite.

See Judges 4; *Shemot Rabbah* 22:2; *Zohar* 2:51a–b; 3:269b; Recanati on Exodus 14:7, 43a. Cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 118b. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital; Galante, *MM*.

82. ***As a mare…*** The simple meaning of the verse is *To a mare among Pharaoh's chariots*, דמיתיך (*dimmitikh*), *I have compared you, my beloved*. According to a midrashic interpretation, the word *dimmitikh* is understood as *I have made you appear*. God made Israel (His *beloved*) appear as mares, and the Egyptian stallions lusted after them and dashed into the sea.

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 27; *Shemot Rabbah* 23:14; *Tanḥuma, Shofetim* 14; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* (ed. Friedlander), 42.

83. **He took mares…** Pharaoh placed the female horses in front of the males, so that they would race toward the Israelites as quickly as possible; then he switched their positions so that the males would attack.

Cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Zuta*, 1:9. "To steel themselves" renders לאתיאשא (*le-itya'asha*), derived from the roots אוש (*'ush*), "to be strong, firm," or אשש (*'shsh*), "to strengthen, make firm." See Isaiah 46:8; *Zohar* 2:140b; 3:160b; and the parallel in *ZḤ* 72a.

84. **Similarly, *And YHVH was going before…*** Similarly, *Shekhinah* (followed closely by *Tif'eret*) went *before* the people of Israel; then, at the Red Sea, She *went behind them*. Thus God made *Shekhinah* (His *beloved*) appear *as a mare among Pharaoh's chariots*.

See *ZḤ* 72a (*ShS*). On the phrase *And YHVH* as alluding to *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret*, see above, note 65; Vital. On *Shekhinah* as *angel of Elohim*, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:19; Naḥmanides on Exodus 14:19; *Zohar* 1:61a; 2:50b (*Mat*), 51a–b; 3:25a, 150b, 269b.

85. **he drew them near…** The simple sense of the clause *Pharaoh* הקריב (*hiqriv*) is that *Pharaoh* himself *drew near*; but the verb *hiqriv* is normally transitive and causative,

stimulating a midrashic reading: *Pharaoh drew* Israel *near* to God.

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:14; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 8; *Shemot Rabbah* 21:5; *Zohar* 1:81b. On the grammatical point, see Rashi and Ibn Ezra (long) on the verse; Gesenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, § 53e.

86. **punishes them with lashes...** Often administered by the enemies of Israel; cf. Isaiah 10:5. After punishing Israel, God feels compassion for them and responds to their voice of prayer by requiting their enemies.

87. **this can be compared to a dove...** Rabbi Yose alludes to a midrashic parable (included here in brackets).

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:14; *Tanḥuma, Shofetim* 13; above, note 85. The full verse in Exodus 14 reads: *Pharaoh drew near, and the Children of Israel raised their eyes, and here was Egypt marching after them! They were very frightened, and the Children of Israel cried out to YHVH*.

The expression "flying stones" renders אבני גירין (*avnei girin*), "stones of arrows." The author is apparently playing on the biblical expression in Isaiah 27:9: אבני גיר (*avnei gir*), *stones of lime*. Cf. Scholem.

88. ***He remembered...*** The verse is problematical, but the subject of *he remembered* is Israel, and the subject of *he who brought them up* is God. According to Rashi (on the verse) and *Zohar* 1:67b, the subject of *he who brought them up* is Moses. Here, according to Rabbi Yitsḥak, the subject of *he remembered* is God.

From the wording *Moses, his people*, Rabbi Yitsḥak concludes that Moses was equivalent to the entire people. See Moses de León, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 378. Midrashic sources draw the same conclusion from other verses. See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1, 9; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1, 13; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 11:25; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:15; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 10.

On the leader being equivalent to the entire people, see *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 23; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:28. On the

people's dependence on the leader, see above, p. 166 and n. 94.

89. ***Stand still and see…*** The verse reads: *Do not be afraid. Stand firm* [or: *still*] *and see YHVH's deliverance*.

90. **That night…** God gathered His פמליא (*pamalya*), "family" (i.e., the heavenly household of angels) to determine whether Israel was worthy of being saved or not.

See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:19. On the patriarchs praying for Israel at the Red Sea, see *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 14:15. Cf. *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:15.

91. **The merit of Jacob…** Rabbi Yehudah indicates that it was specifically Jacob who saved the people by declaring, *Had it not been YHVH who was for us*. According to midrashic tradition, the name *Israel* in this verse refers to Jacob, who is known as Israel the Elder.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:11 (in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi); *Midrash Tehillim* 124:1. On the association of Psalm 124 with the Exodus or the splitting of the Red Sea, see the continuation of the psalm; *Midrash Tehillim* 114:6; *ZḤ* 30d (*MhN*); *OY*.

92. ***If you refrain…*** The context (Isaiah 58:13–14) reads: *If you refrain from trampling Sabbath, from engaging in your affairs on My holy day, and call Sabbath "delight," the holy of YHVH "honored"; if you honor it by not going your own ways, pursuing your affairs, or speaking a word, then you will delight in YHVH*…. The phrase *speaking a word* may refer to idle, mundane, or excessive talk, business, or legal proceedings.

93. **For Sabbath is equivalent to the whole Torah…** The essence of Torah.

See JT *Berakhot* 1:4, 3c; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 20; *Devarim Rabbah* 4:4; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 92; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 33; *Shemot Rabbah* 25:12; *Zohar* 2:89a, 92a, 151a; *ZḤ* 17b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 335; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110.

94. **delight of all…** During Sabbath a person rests, feasts, and partakes of spiritual sustenance. Both heavenly and earthly creatures enjoy its delights.

See *Zohar* 2:88a, 204b, 252b, 265b; 3:94b, 105a.

95. ***callings of holiness…*** מקראי קדש (*Miqra'ei qodesh*), *Convocations* [or: *proclamations, assemblies*] *of holiness*. This biblical phrase introduces a list of holy days, beginning with Sabbath. Here, Rabbi Abba emphasizes a hyperliteral meaning: *callings of holiness*, indicating how one should greet Sabbath: calling, or inviting, her to a home prepared with delights.

96. **while still daylight** One should begin Sabbath before sunset, "adding from the mundane to the holy" in honor of Sabbath, inviting her into one's home ahead of time.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 7; JT *Berakhot* 4:1, 7c; BT *Berakhot* 27a. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:7.

97. ***The holy of YHVH 'honored'*—the day…** Whereas Sabbath eve symbolizes *Shekhinah*, Sabbath day symbolizes Her male partner, *Yesod*. Sabbath is their wedding celebration, so the two of them—and their corresponding Sabbath times—"are one." See *Zohar* 1:5b.

98. ***If you honor it…*** See BT *Shabbat* 113a–b: *"If you honor it by not going your own ways. If you honor it*—that your Sabbath garments should not resemble your weekday garments.… *By not going your own ways*—that your Sabbath walking should not resemble your weekday walking. *Pursuing your affairs*—your affairs are forbidden, the affairs of heaven are permitted. *Or speaking a word*—that your Sabbath speech should not resemble your weekday speech."

99. ***Pursuing your affairs, or speaking a word…*** Every human action below, including speech, stimulates either a holy or a demonic power above. On Sabbath, one should stimulate and celebrate the divine union.

On speaking during Sabbath, see the end of the passage from BT *Shabbat* in the preceding note; above, note 92; JT *Shabbat* 15:3, 15a–b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:16; *Tosafot, Shabbat* 113b, s.v. *she-lo*; *Zohar* 1:32a; 2:207a; 3:94b, 105a–b.

On the principle of "Through arousal below, there is arousal above," see *Zohar* 1:35a, 77b–78a, 82b, 86b, 88a, 156b, 164a–b, 233a, 235a, 244a; 2:31b, 35b, 265a; 3:31b, 40b, 92a–b, 105a, 110b, 112b, 145a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 144. On Sabbath as the divine wedding celebration, see *Zohar* 3:94b, 105a.

100. **did not want Israel to arouse...** God did not want Israel to stimulate any response above through crying out in prayer, because the patriarchs had already initiated an arousal by interceding for Israel (see above at note 90), and that arousal affected a supernal realm. Any words from below at this point would only interfere and arouse Judgment.

The holy name interwoven in the clause יהוה ילחם לכם (*YHVH yillaḥem lakhem*), *YHVH will fight for you*, is apparently the divine name יי"ל (*yod, yod, lamed*), composed of the initial letters of these three words. This name is one of the seventy-two three-letter names formed from the verses Exodus 14:19–21, describing the splitting of the Red Sea. See below, notes 216, 223–26. These names are associated with the sefirotic triad *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, symbolized by the patriarchs.

See Galante; *MM*; *MmD*. For other interpretations of the name represented by *YHVH yillaḥem lakhem*, see *OY*; Vital; *Sullam*.

101. ***YHVH*** **always signifies Compassion...** According to rabbinic tradition, the divine names *YHVH* and *Elohim* indicate respectively Compassion and Justice (or Judgment). The verse in Exodus reads *YHVH will fight for you*, but Rabbi Yose wonders where the Compassion is, given that the entire Egyptian army drowned in the Red Sea.

On the qualities of *YHVH* and *Elohim*, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:6. The verse describing the drowning of the Egyptians (Exodus 14:28) reads in full: *The waters came back and covered the chariots and the riders—all Pharaoh's force who were coming after them in the sea; not even one of them remained*.

102. **even here Judgment is with Compassion…** Compassionately, God insisted that the Egyptians receive a proper burial. When the earth refused to accept them, God swore to her by His right hand that He would not punish her for holding their corpses. The Egyptians were accorded this honor because Pharaoh had admitted: *This time I have sinned! YHVH is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong* (Exodus 9:27).

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 9; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:12; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:37; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Midrash Tehillim* 22:17; *Zohar* 1:59b. Cf. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 17, 39; and David Luria, ad loc. (39), n. 62.

103. **did not want Israel to arouse a word…** If the Israelites had cried out any words of prayer, out of their bitterness toward the Egyptians they would have strengthened Judgment above and thereby overwhelmed Compassion.

104. **But look at what is written…** In the apocalyptic battle foretold by Zechariah, God will defeat Israel's enemies. Here too the name *YHVH* appears. Does this mean that He will show Compassion?

105. **this name signifies…** The name *YHVH* signifies Compassion. When it appears in a military context, it signifies Judgment with Compassion. Even the apparent exception in the verse from Isaiah proves the rule. God will change His compassionate appearance and avenge Israel—appearing *like a mighty one, like a warrior*—but even in

executing Judgment, His compassion for humanity ("His handiwork") lingers.

See *Zohar* 1:173b–174a; 2:137a. Cf. *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:3; 2:8–9; *Zohar* 2:122a.

On God's caring for His handiwork, see BT *Megillah* 10b, where Rabbi Yoḥanan teaches that at the Red Sea "the ministering angels wanted to sing, but the blessed Holy One said, 'My handiwork is drowning in the sea, and you are singing?'"

106. ***Why are you crying out to Me?...*** The verse—spoken at the Red Sea—concludes: *Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward!*

This verse is discussed briefly and enigmatically in *Zohar* 2:178b, in the section of the *Zohar* known as *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment): *"YHVH said to Moses, 'Why are you crying out to Me?'—to Me*, precisely! *'Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward!'—and have them journey forward*, precisely! It depended on מזלא (*mazzala*), the flux of destiny...." In other words, at this critical moment Israel should not focus their prayer on *Tif'eret* (symbolized by *YHVH* and indicated in the verse by *Me*), but rather they should *journey forward*, directing their prayer to the highest sefirotic realm, *Keter*, known as *mazzala*.

See BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 28a: "Rava said, 'Life, children, and sustenance do not depend on merit but on *mazzala*, destiny.'" The word מזלא (*mazzala*) means "constellation, planet, planetary influence, zodiacal sign, destiny, fortune, guardian angel." In the *Zohar, mazzala* is associated with the root נזל (*nzl*), "to flow," and often refers to the flow of emanation from *Binah*. However, here in *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (and in the *Idrot* of the *Zohar*), *mazzala* symbolizes *Keter*. See above, p. 17, n. 67; *Zohar* 2:52b.

Sifra di-Tsni'uta (The Book of Concealment) appears in *Zohar* 2:176b–179a. Composed in short, obscure sentences, it is an anonymous, highly condensed commentary on the

beginning of the Torah. Its subject is the mysteries of divine being.

107. ***YHVH provided…*** וימן יהוה (*Vayman YHVH*). The verb מנה (*mnh*) means "to assign, appoint, apportion, allot, provide." Rabbi Yehudah wonders why the verse in Jonah states that God *provided* a fish for Jonah. Wasn't Jonah, in fact, provided for the fish, who consumed him? He answers by explaining that the fish protected Jonah.

The verse in Daniel 1:10 reads:… *who provided your food and your drink*. For another interpretation of וימן (*vayman*), see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10, in the name of Rabbi Tarfon: "That fish was ממונה (*memunneh*), appointed [or: designated], to swallow Jonah ever since the six days of Creation, as is said: וימן יהוה (*Vayman YHVH*), *God appointed* [or: *designated, prepared*], *a large fish to swallow Jonah*." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:5; *Tanḥuma, Vayiqra* 8; *Zohar* 1:69b; 2:198b.

108. **Once he was brought inside…** See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10: "Rabbi Tarfon said, '… He entered its mouth as a person enters the great synagogue, and he stood there. The two eyes of the fish were like glass windows providing light to Jonah.' Rabbi Me'ir said, One pearl was suspended inside the belly of the fish and it provided light to Jonah like the sun shining at noon, and it showed him everything in the sea and in the depths.'"

See David Luria, ad loc.; Galante.

109. **why is it written: *Out of my straits…*** The verse reads: מצרה לי (*Mi-tsarah li*), *Out of my distress, I called to YHVH and He answered me; from the belly of Sheol I cried, and You heard my voice*. The word צרה (*tsarah*), *distress*, derives from צר (*tsar*), "narrow." The point here is the contradiction between Jonah's complaint of distress and his supposed spaciousness.

According to Jonah 2:1, *Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights*. Here, Rabbi Yehudah indicates that the fish died because it was unable to endure

Jonah's presence in his belly for that long. See *Zohar* 1:121a; 2:199b.

110. **דג (*dag*)... דגה (*dagah*)...** The masculine and feminine forms of the word meaning "fish." The first appears in Jonah 2:1: *YHVH provided a large* דג (*dag*), *fish, to swallow Jonah*. The second appears in 2:2: *Jonah prayed to YHVH his God from the belly of* הדגה (*ha-dagah*), *the fish*. This feminine form, *dagah*, is understood here as implying that the fish had died, based on the fact that this same form appears in the verse in Exodus describing the death of the fish in the Nile during the first of the ten plagues (blood).

See *Zohar* 2:199b. Cf. BT *Nedarim* 51b; Ibn Ezra and Radak on Jonah 2:2.

111. ***Out of my straits I called...*** Jonah did not originally feel constricted, which is why he did not say *I was in straits*, or *I dwelled in straits*; rather, only when the other fish of the sea began attacking did he feel constricted and distressed, at which point he called to God *out of my straits*.

112. ***From the belly of Sheol...*** The verse concludes: *I cried, and You heard my voice*. The reference to Sheol, the abode of the dead, indicates that the fish had died. Cf. *Zohar* 2:199b.

113. **revived that fish...** Implied, as it were, by the masculine form in Jonah 2:11: *YHVH spoke* לדג (*la-dag*), *to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land*.

See above, note 110; *Zohar* 1:121a; 2:199b.

114. **the place to which he was bound...** *Shekhinah*, who is known as אלהים (*Elohim*), God. She is joined to *Tif'eret*, who is known as יהוה (*YHVH*).

115. ***to Me*, precisely** To *Tif'eret*, known as *YHVH*. Moses was linked with this *sefirah*, so naturally he addressed it in prayer. However, God told him that now Israel required miraculous power from an even higher realm: *Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward!* See above, note 106; *OY*.

116. ***Have them journey*—from proliferating words...** There is no time to pray; just march ahead and a miracle will occur!

Cf. *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:15; BT *Sotah* 37a; *Shemot Rabbah* 21:8; *Midrash Tehillim* 76:1.

117. **it reverts above...** To the world of the *sefirot* (or, to the preceding words in the verse: *Why are you crying out to Me?*). All of Israel were situated in, and focusing their prayer on, *Tif'eret*—whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel). Now, however, they had to *journey forward* and focus their prayer on a higher realm. See above, notes 106, 115.

118. ***your staff*, on which is engraved the Holy Name...** Moses is instructed to bend and turn his hand so that the side of the staff on which is engraved the divine name will face the waters, terrifying them and causing them to split. Later, Moses will use other sides of his staff to twice bring forth water from rocks. See Exodus 17:5–6; Numbers 20:7–11; *Zohar* 2:64a–b; *ZḤ* 30b (*MhN*); Galante.

In the verse the imperative verb נטה (*neteh*) means *stretch*, but here it is interpreted according to another of its meanings: "turn, incline, bend." The verse concludes: *so that the Children of Israel may come into the midst of the sea on dry land*.

On the waters fleeing from the divine name on Moses' staff, see *Devarim Rabbah* 3:8; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 87; *Midrash Tehillim* 114:9. On the staff being engraved with the divine name, see also *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 2:21; 4:20; 14:21; *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, add. 2, 78b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Sefer ha-Yashar, Shemot*, 307; *Zohar* 1:6b, 9a; 2:28a, 60b, 64a; *ZḤ* 30b (*MhN*). (According to all the midrashim listed here, the staff was engraved with the name *YHVH*.) Cf. M *Avot* 5:6; Ibn Ezra (short), Exodus 3:13.

119. **staff of *Elohim*... staff of Moses** For the expression *the staff of Elohim*, see Exodus 4:20; 17:9. On the expression "the staff of Moses," cf. Exodus 9:23; 10:13. On both expressions, see *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 23; *Shemot Rabbah* 26:3; *Zohar* 2:115a (*RM*).

120. **There were two...** "The staff of Moses" was a physical staff, while *the staff of Elohim* was a divine potency. Yet when this divine power materialized in Moses' staff, they functioned as one, as indicated by Rav Hamnuna.

On the two staffs, see *ZḤ* 30c (*MhN*). According to *Ra'aya Meheimna* and *Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*, Metatron (the chief angel) is known as *staff* or *the staff of Elohim*. See *Zohar* 1:27a (*TZ*); 3:255a (*RM*), 277a (*RM*); *TZ* 60, 93b; *ZḤ* 110d (*Tiq*); *OY*.

Historically, Rav Hamnuna Sava (the Elder) was a mid-third-century Babylonian teacher, but in the *Zohar* he is a contemporary of Rabbi Shim'on bar Yoḥai (who lived in the second century). In the Talmud, Rav Hamnuna occasionally transmits teachings of Rabbi Shim'on (e.g., BT *Ḥullin* 21a, *Temurah* 15a), and several prayers are attributed to him (BT *Berakhot* 11b, 17a, 58a). In the *Zohar* roles are reversed and Rabbi Shim'on cites Rav Hamnuna. Throughout the *Zohar* Hamnuna is greatly revered, and several original ritual acts are attributed to him. His book is cited frequently. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:60; Vol. 1, pp. 37–38, n. 257.

This book is one of the many volumes housed in the real or imaginary library of the author(s) of the *Zohar*. See Matt, *Zohar*: *The Book of Enlightenment*, 25; and the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, on *Zohar* 1:7a: "All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*...have been lost in the wanderings of exile.... Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*." For a catalogue of these books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*.

121. **intended to arouse the side of *Gevurah*...** The "Power" of God, identified with the divine left hand.

Appropriately, Moses was told: *Stretch out your hand*—referring to his left hand.

On "hand" as the left hand, see Isaiah 48:13; Judges 5:26; Psalms 74:11; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 6:8; BT *Menaḥot* 36b; *Tanḥuma, Bo* 14; Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 13:9; *Zohar* 3:178a.

122. **On the side of *Gevurah* waters arouse...** Although *Ḥesed* is often symbolized by water, here the point is that through the "power" of *Gevurah* water issues into the world. Rabbi Shim'on wonders, then, why God would tell Moses to stretch out his left hand and thereby stimulate *Gevurah*, which would make the waters flow, not dry them up. He explains that first God commanded Moses to raise his staff—engraved with the divine name—in order to dry up the waters; then, to stretch out his left hand, to bring the waters back upon the Egyptians.

See Exodus 14:26. On *Gevurah* and water, see above, p. 85, n. 52. Cf. the expression גבורות גשמים (*gevurot geshamim*), "the power of rain," in M *Berakhot* 5:2.

123. ***And split it*. But they were abysses...** How could abysses—thought to be bottomless depths of the ocean—possibly be split? Rabbi Shim'on explains that God performed a double miracle: congealing the depths and splitting the waters, thus enabling Israel to walk on a solid foundation in *the midst of the sea*.

See *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 14:16. Cf. Naḥmanides on Exodus 15:19; M *Avot* 5:4; *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:16.

124. ***He removed the wheel...*** The full verse reads: *He removed the wheel of their* [literally, *his*] *chariots, causing them* [literally, *him*] *to drive with difficulty, and Egypt said, "Let me flee from before Israel, for YHVH is fighting for them against Egypt!"*

In this verse the word אופן (*ofan*), *wheel of*, is in the singular form, serving as a collective noun, meaning *wheels*

of. Here, however, Rabbi Shim’on insists on the singular sense.

125. ***I saw the living beings…*** Ezekiel sees the divine chariot-throne carried by four *ḥayyot*, “(angelic) living beings.”

On this verse, see BT *Ḥagigah* 13b. On the final clause of this paragraph, see Daniel 7:14.

126. **founded the world upon him…** According to Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Korhah (*Bereshit Rabbah* 12:9), the word בהבראם (*be-hibbare’am*), *when they were created*, is an anagram of באברהם (*be-Avraham*), “through Abraham,” indicating that *heaven and earth* were created for his sake.

See *Zohar* 1:3b, 86b, 91b, 93a, 105b, 128b, 154b, 230b, 247a; 2:31a, 79a, 220b; 3:117a.

127. **Jacob *…in whom I glory…*** Abraham and Isaac symbolize respectively *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, while Jacob (or Israel) symbolizes *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel), who harmonizes and stabilizes the preceding sefirotic pair.

On the need to balance the qualities of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15: “The blessed Holy One said, ‘If I create the world by the quality of compassion, its sins will abound; by the quality of justice, the world will not endure. Rather, I will create it by both the quality of justice and the quality of compassion. Oh that it may endure!’”

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *He said to me, “You are My servant, Israel in whom* אתפאר (*etpa’ar*), *I glory.*” This final word alludes to its cognate noun, תפארת (*Tif’eret*). See *Zohar* 1:219a.

128. **joined to the Tree of Life…** To *Tif’eret*, symbolized by this tree. Consequently, in a certain sense Jacob never died.

See BT *Ta’anit* 5b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “Jacob our father did not die…, as is said: *Do not fear, My servant Jacob—declares YHVH—do not be dismayed, O Israel! For I will save you from afar, your seed from the land of*

their captivity (Jeremiah 30:10). The verse compares him to his seed; just as his seed is alive, so he too is alive."

See Rashi and Naḥmanides on Genesis 49:33; *Tosafot, Ta'anit* 5b, s.v. *ya'aqov avinu*; *Zohar* 1:235b, 248b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 108–9, 370; idem, Commentary on the Ten *Sefirot*, 336b.

129. **And when did he die?...** According to the simple sense of the Bible, of course, Jacob did die. Rabbi Shim'on indicates that this was caused by *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by *bed* and is linked with the realm of death.

On *Shekhinah* as "bed" and *bed of Solomon*, see *Zohar* 1:37a, 225b, 248b; 2:5a (*MhN*), 30a–b, 51a; 3:60a, 114a, 118b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 370. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 55b, where it is said that Jacob kept a bed in his tent for *Shekhinah*. See Rashi on Genesis 49:4. According to the eleventh-century Catholic reformer Peter Damian, Mary is the golden couch upon which God, tired out by the actions of humanity and the angels, lies down to rest. See Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess*, 280.

The full verse in Proverbs, warning against the seductive *strange woman*, reads: *Her feet descend to death; her steps grasp Sheol*. In the *Zohar* this verse is sometimes applied to the demonic realm (*Zohar* 1:161b [*ST*], 190a) and sometimes to *Shekhinah* (1:35b; 3:107b).

On *Shekhinah* as the Tree of Death, see above, note 15. On the relation between *Shekhinah* and the demonic realm, see Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 189–92; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:376–79; Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess*, 249, 251–54.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *Jacob finished instructing his sons, and he gathered his feet into the bed, and he expired, and was gathered to his people*.

130. **consummation of the patriarchs...** Jacob attained the rung of *Tif'eret*, harmonizing and consummating the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, who are symbolized respectively by Abraham and Isaac.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 76:1, in the name of Rabbi Re'uven: "The chosen of the patriarchs is Jacob, as is said: *For Yah has chosen Jacob for Himself* (Psalms 135:4)."

See *Zohar* 1:119b, 133a, 144b, 150a, 152a (*ST*), 163b, 171b, 172b, 173b, 180a, 207a; 2:23a, 26a. On Jacob being complete, see *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 8:7, 112c; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 31, 312; *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 25:27; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:5; BT *Pesaḥim* 56a.

131. **This a supernal, holy living being...** Here Rabbi Shim'on begins to expound the verse from Ezekiel with which he opened (above at note 125). The various angelic living beings swim within the ocean of *Shekhinah*.

The "supernal, holy living being" apparently refers to *Shekhinah*, as often in the *Zohar* (see below at note 146). Several commentators see a reference to *Tif'eret* (whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el*, "Beauty of Israel"), alluded to in the preceding paragraph. See *OY*; Galante; *MM*; Scholem; *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:39); and Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, § 406: "There is one *ḥayyah* (living being) there whose name is Israel." Cf. *Zohar* 2:4b (*MhN*).

On *Shekhinah* as "living being," see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 508–9; *Zohar* 1:12b, 16a, 21a, 46b–47a, 211a (Vol. 3, p. 297–98, n. 205), 242a; 2:126a, 242a; 3:39b, 46b; *ZḤ* 9b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 51; idem, Commentary on the Ten *Sefirot*, 338b.

The verse in Psalms concludes: *gliding creatures there innumerable, living beings small and great*. See *Zohar* 1:236a, 247a–b; 2:12a, 30b, 56b.

132. **When the sea heaves...** When *Shekhinah* arouses in harsh Judgment, angelic potencies within Her ("ships") are agitated and angels appointed over human affairs ("fish") scatter. When the latter find humans marked as grave sinners, they devour them.

On the ships sailing the sea of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:34b, 124a; 2:30a, 50b, 54a, 56a. On Her fish, see *Zohar*

12a, 30b. On the mark of sin, see *Zohar* 3:36b, 76a; *OY*.

"Sloping caverns" renders קפטירי (*qaftirei*), a Zoharic neologism with a range of meaning. Here, the sense apparently derives from the rabbinic term קטפרם (*qatafres*), "incline, slope," (from Greek *katapheres*, "going down, sloping, inclined)." See M *Oholot* 3:3; *Zohar* 3:36b; *Ma'arikh*, s.v. *qatpirei*; *DE*; *NO*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 351. On "caverns in the earth," see Isaiah 2:19. For another interpretation, see Galante.

133. **leader of the sea...** *Yesod*, the divine phallus and partner of *Shekhinah*. By uniting with Her, He calms the powers of Judgment raging within Her. *Yesod* is symbolized by Leviathan and known as זה (*zeh*), which usually means "this" but in this verse *whom*.

On *Yesod* as Leviathan, see *Zohar* 2:11b, 50b; 3:58a, 60a, all of which quote Psalms 104:26 as the proof-text. Cf. 1:247a. On *Yesod* as *zeh*, see above, p. 173 and n. 123. On the calming of the sea, see *Zohar* 1:69b.

On the erotic sense of *to play with*, see *OY*. Cf. Genesis 26:8; Exodus 32:6. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 152a, where Rabbi Shim'on son of Ḥalafta refers to the phallus as "peacemaker of the home."

134. **supernal field...** *Shekhinah*, inhabited by the angels. See BT *Ta'anit* 29b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:22; *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 11; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 35–37; *Zohar* 1:36a, 85a–b, 122a, 128b, 141b, 142b, 143b, 224b, 249b; 2:60b, 61b; 3:74a, 84a, 133b (*IR*), 135b (*IR*), 286b–287a, 288a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 365.

135. **As above, so below...** A cardinal principle of Kabbalah. The enigmatic wording here may mean: "As in the divine realm, so in the world below; as below on earth, so in the sea; as above in the higher *sefirot*, so in *Shekhinah*; as above, so below; as below on earth, so in the sea."

For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*. On the theme of "as above, so below," see *Zohar* 1:38a, 57b–58a, 129a, 145b, 156b, 158b, 205b;

2:15b (*MhN*), 20a (*MhN*), 82b, 144a, 251a (*Heikh*); 3:45b, 65b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:273. On the similar Hermetic formulation, see *Secretum secretorum*, ed. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 262.

136. **The body of that sea…** The body of *Shekhinah*. The divine body (sometimes called "the body of *Shekhinah*") is described in graphic detail in *Shi'ur Qomah* (Measure of [the Divine] Stature), and the feminine divine body is described by Rabbi Shim'on himself in the *Idrot* of the *Zohar*. In *Shi'ur Qomah* the various divine limbs are assigned divine names. Correspondingly, the earthly ocean comprises various parts, each with its own name.

See Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§ 688–711; *Zohar* 3:141b–142a (*IR*), 296a (*IZ*); *OY*; Galante; Scholem. On the phrase "the body of *Shekhinah*," see *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:370); Scholem, *Major Trends*, 66.

137. ***Zebulun will dwell by the shore of seas…*** According to this verse from Jacob's blessing in Genesis 49, the tribe of Zebulun lived along the seacoast of the Mediterranean. A midrashic tradition (*Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:17) understands *by the shore of seas* as referring to two seas, apparently the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee, suggesting that Zebulun's territory included a strip of land extending eastward to the latter body of water. Josephus similarly states (*Antiquities of the Jews* 5:1:22) that Zebulun's territory "included the land that lay as far as the Lake of Ginnosar [the Sea of Galilee] and that which belonged to Carmel and the [Mediterranean] Sea."

The "supernal mystery" of *seas* may refer to different aspects of *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:241b (Vol. 3, p. 475, n. 800; p. 477, n. 806).

Rabbi Shim'on also indicates that the Sea of Galilee was the source of the חלזון (*ḥillazon*), the *Murex trunculus* snail, from whose glands was extracted the violet, or blue-purple,

dye traditionally used to color the cord of the tzitzit (tassels on the hem of a garment, and later on a prayer shawl).

However, according to various sources, the Sea of Galilee was in the territory of the tribe of Naphtali. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 355; *Bereshit Rabbah* 98(99):17; BT *Bava Qamma* 81b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 18; David Luria's long discussion ad loc., n. 45; Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets; NZ*; Scholem. According to Joshua 19:10–16, the territory of Zebulun was landlocked, bordering on neither the Mediterranean nor the Sea of Galilee.

As for the *ḥillazon* snail, it was found off the Mediterranean coast, not in the Sea of Galilee. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 354; BT *Shabbat* 26a, *Megillah* 6a; Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*. For the *Zohar*'s linking of Zebulun, Sea of Galilee, and *ḥillazon*, see 2:149b; cf. 3:150a, 151a, 175b.

Rabbi Shim'on associates Zebulun with the *sefirah* of *Netsaḥ*, pictured as the divine right thigh extending from *Tif'eret* (who is symbolized by Jacob). This association is based on a play on words: the reference in Jacob's blessing to ירכתו (*yarkhato*), *his flank*, and the reference in Exodus to ירך (*yerekh*), *the thigh of, Jacob*. See above, p. 102, n. 115; *Zohar* 1:115a, 241b, 243a. *Netsaḥ* emanates to *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the Sea of Galilee (*Zohar* 2:23a; 3:150a).

The full verse in Genesis 49 reads: *Zebulun will dwell by the shore of seas, and he by a haven of ships, his flank upon Sidon*.

138. **Chariot above chariot...** The various powers conducting all the worlds.

139. **chariot empowered over Egypt...** Its heavenly power was dependent on a single heavenly prince, referred to here as *the wheel of their chariots* (see above, note 124). Once God *removed* (or cast down) this *wheel*, all the chariot forces above aiding Egypt lost power. Consequently, the earthly chariots of Pharaoh became powerless. The phrase *those who rely on him* refers here to heavenly princes of other nations who were dependent upon Egypt's heavenly

prince or to those nations themselves who were dependent upon Egypt.

See Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 14:25. On the heavenly princes and their nations, see above, p. 221 and nn. 80–81; *Shemot Rabbah* 22:2.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *He removed the wheel of their* [literally, *his*] *chariots, causing them* [literally, *him*] *to drive with difficulty, and Egypt said, "Let me flee from before Israel, for YHVH is fighting for them against Egypt!"* The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *YHVH of Hosts, God of Israel, says, "Behold, I am bringing punishment upon Amon of Thebes and upon Pharaoh—upon Egypt, her gods, and her kings—upon Pharaoh and upon those who rely on him."* Amon was originally the god of Thebes and later the Egyptian "king of the gods."

140. **dominion of Egypt prevailed…** See above, p. 18 and n. 69. The order of the two verses in Exodus is reversed here.

141. **once their power was broken…** Once the heavenly power of the Egyptians was crushed, the power of all those nations linked to Egypt was crushed. Once the nations' heavenly princes were defeated, their nations below were defeated. The rout began when God *removed the wheel of their chariots* (the Egyptian heavenly prince); subsequently, all the chariots lost power. See above, note 139.

142. **rather *the wheel of his chariots…*** The unusual construction—combining the singular *wheel* with the plural *chariots*—refers to the heavenly prince of Egypt, to whom were joined all the powers (*chariots*) of the other nations' heavenly princes. See above, notes 124, 139.

143. ***You, cleaving to YHVH your God*** The verse concludes: *are alive every one of you today!*

144. ***For Yah has chosen… For YHVH's share***… On these two verses, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 312; *Zohar* 1:161b; 2:126a–b.

145. **from holy seed...** From the patriarchs.

On the two-thousand-year preexistence of the Torah, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:2; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 19:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:24; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 4; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:12; *Bahir* 4 (5); *Zohar* 2:161a; 3:128a (*IR*), 159a.

146. **All the camps above...** All the heavenly powers are nourished by the sea of *Shekhinah*. She is also the "holy living being," directing the movement of all these forces.

See above, note 131. The verse in Psalms concludes: *gliding creatures there innumerable, living beings small and great*. On the wording, "at Her command they journey...," see *Targum Onqelos*, Numbers 9:18.

147. **He first removed their power...** Their heavenly prince (see above, notes 80, 139). Now, though, Rabbi Shim'on adds a new twist: God accomplished this by causing *Shekhinah* ("that supernal holy site") to withdraw, which deprived all the powers beneath Her of the vivifying flow of emanation and rendered all the princes of the nations and their forces powerless. According to this interpretation, *Shekhinah* Herself is *the wheel of his chariots* (Exodus 14:25) and *one wheel on the ground* (Ezekiel 1:15). See above at note 125.

On the heavenly prince passing through fire, see above, p. 21 and n. 81.

148. **summoned the prince...** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:5; *Shemot Rabbah* 21:6; *Zohar* 2:56a, 170b, 198b. Cf. *Midrash Va-Yosha* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:47).

149. **they were frightened and cried out...** See Exodus 14:10: *Pharaoh drew near, and the Children of Israel raised their eyes, and here was Egypt marching after them! They were very frightened, and the Children of Israel cried out to YHVH*.

150. **What did the sea see?...** According to the verse in Psalms describing the splitting of the Red Sea, *The sea saw and fled*. A midrashic tradition relates that the sea saw

the coffin of Joseph, which Moses had rescued from Egypt (see Exodus 13:19). Joseph had proven his virtue in Egypt by resisting the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife and fleeing from her. Now, in Israel's time of distress, *the sea saw* Joseph's coffin and, as a reward for his virtuous act of fleeing, it too *fled*, splitting its waters.

See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:15; *Bereshit Rabbah* 87:8; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 9, *Naso* 30; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 34; *Midrash Tehillim* 114:9; *Zohar* 2:230b.

On Joseph's virtue, see above, p. 78, n. 30. The full verse in Genesis reads: *She seized him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" And he left his garment in her hand and fled, escaping outside*.

151. **Because they saw the land of Egypt…burning with fire…** Rabbi Yitsḥak reads the verse hyperliterally: *YHVH is fighting for them against Egypt*—not against the Egyptians, but against the land of Egypt.

Cf. *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 5; *Shemot Rabbah* 21:11.

152. **wishes to remove a dominion on earth…** When God seeks to defeat a nation on earth, He first removes its heavenly prince above.

See above, p. 221 and n. 80. On God's not removing one dominion until He appoints another, see *Zohar* 2:16b (*MhN*). The verse in Daniel reads: *The Most High is sovereign over the kingdom of humanity, and He gives it to whomever He wishes*.

153. **אשר תנה (*Asher tenah*), *You have set…*** The word אשר (*asher*) is a relative pronoun meaning "who," usually left untranslated in this verse. The form תנה (*tenah*) is technically imperative ("set") but is normally understood here as the past tense: *You have set*.

See Radak and Ibn Ezra on the verse; Gesenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, § 66h.

154. **intensifies His Judgment…** His *sefirah* of *Gevurah* (Power), also known as *Din* (Judgment), which appears

through *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:201a.

155. **verse should read...** Rabbi Yose wonders about the strange combination of the relative pronoun אשר (*asher*), "who," and the imperative תנה (*tenah*), "set." See above, note 153. It would seem more logical for the verse to employ either the relative pronoun and the normal past tense—נתת אשר (*asher natatta*), *who have set*—or just the imperative: תנה (*tenah*), *set*.

156. **deepest river of all...** *Binah*, the Divine Mother and source of emanation for all the lower *sefirot*. She is known as אשר (*asher*), *who*. In this psalm, King David addresses Her, imploring Her to flow upon *Tif'eret*, known as *the heavens*. So, the unusual syntax is intentional: *Who, set Your splendor upon the heavens*.

On *Binah* as *asher*, see 1:15a, 158a, 246a (Vol. 3, p. 504, n. 903). On the kabbalistic meaning of *I will be who I will be*, see *Zohar* 1:15a–b; 3:11a, 65a–b. In the verse in Psalms, the word על (*al*) can be rendered *above* or *upon* (*the heavens*).

157. **When this deepest river...** When the flow of emanation issues from *Binah*, the divine couple (*Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret*) unite joyously, Israel's enemies are vanquished, and the people of Israel (linked to *Shekhinah*) are free and confident. Rabbi Yose may also be implying that through this process *Shekhinah* (known as *Your name*) manifests Her power, becoming *majestic*.

מטרוניתא (*Matronita*) is an aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron, married woman, noble lady," and is often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the Queen.

158. **with a load in front of him** Apparently, driving a donkey.

159. **forbidden to join him...** On the prohibition against traveling with an ignoramus, see BT *Pesaḥim* 49b.

"Ignoramus" renders עם הארץ (*am ha-arets*), "people of the land, rural population"; hence, one who is coarse, unrefined, illiterate, ignorant of the Torah, and unobservant of certain ritual practices.

160. **Maybe he is a great man** In *Zohar* 1:204b–205a, Rabbi Yose also gives a stranger the benefit of the doubt. On the other hand, in *Zohar* 2:95a the two rabbis switch roles and it is Rabbi Ḥiyya who says, “Sometimes in those empty ones, a person may discover bells of gold.”

161. **In roughness of crossing…** A typical neologistic pronouncement. The stranger warns the two rabbis that they must all stay close together and take another path.

The word דוקפא (*duqpa*) may be a playful variation on תוקפא (*tuqpa*), “strength, severity, harshness.” קוטפא (*Qutpa*) is apparently based on קטופא (*qetufa*), “cluster.” See above, p. 178, n. 140; *Zohar* 2:175a; *MM*; *DE*; *NO*; Scholem.

162. **I must tell you…** I must warn you of the imminent danger.

The verse in Leviticus is understood to mean that you should not endanger a person by offering bad advice—or as here, by withholding vital information. See *Sifra* 2:14, 88d (which refers specifically to the danger of robbers).

163. **On that other way…** On the path on which the two rabbis had been walking, a priest was once murdered by an ignoramus (see above, note 159). Ever since, God has demanded requital for the blood that was spilled there, and consequently robbers (empowered by the forces of Judgment) ambush the unwary.

164. ***Yet this day at Nob…*** The verse continues: *he will wave his hand* [or: *shake his fist*]. The subject is the Assyrian king, accompanied by his armies and poised to attack Jerusalem. This king (whose assault is foretold by Isaiah) is traditionally identified as Sennacherib. See below.

Nob was apparently on Mount Scopus, overlooking Jerusalem. With his hand, the king is either threatening the city, waving contemptuously, or signaling his army to attack.

165. **masters of the Academy…** The rabbis of the Talmud.

In BT *Sanhedrin* 95a, Rav Huna links the reference to Nob in Isaiah to a story in 1 Samuel 21–22. There, David is fleeing from King Saul and comes to Nob, where he finds the priest Ahimelech, who provides David with bread and a weapon. In retaliation, Saul orders the massacre of all the priests and inhabitants of Nob. According to Rav Huna, Saul’s act of murder had never been fully expiated, and God set a term of punishment for it, which was due to expire at the end of the day that Sennacherib stood at Nob, poised to attack. The phrase *Yet this day at Nob to stand* is

interpreted: "*Yet this day* remained of the term in which an enemy could *stand* and attack on account of the sin committed *at Nob*." If Sennacherib had attacked before sundown, he would have destroyed Jerusalem; but he postponed the assault to the next day, letting his army rest, and that night—the term of punishment having expired—his forces were decimated by an angel.

See 2 Kings 19:35; *Zohar* 2:224a; *ZḤ* 81d (*MhN, Rut*).

166. **Who is this day?...** The anonymous stranger identifies *this day* with *Shekhinah* (Assembly of Israel), the cosmic day, the consummation of the seven lower *sefirot*, which are symbolized by the seven days of the week. *Shekhinah* is also symbolized by אלישבע (*Elisheva*), understood as meaning "God of seven," completion of the seven lower *sefirot*.

Aaron symbolizes *Ḥesed*, the right arm of God embracing *Shekhinah*. Through his service in the Tabernacle ("the house," symbolizing *Shekhinah*), *Aaron took Elisheba*—he adorned *Shekhinah* and conducted Her to Her spouse, *Tif'eret*. The priests serving in the Temple, who are descended from Aaron, imitate his role and stimulate the union of the divine couple.

The verse in Exodus reads: *Aaron took Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab, sister of Nahshon, as a wife*. See *Zohar* 3:38b–39a. On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18. On Aaron as bridesman of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 3:53b, 177b, 180b; cf. 3:124a.

167. **Ahimelech...** The chief priest in Nob (see above, note 165). He and his fellow priests carried on the tradition of Aaron, serving in the sanctuary at Nob and preparing *Shekhinah* for Her union with *Tif'eret*. When they were massacred, *Shekhinah* was unable to unite with Her spouse and "the house [the sanctuary at Nob] was destroyed." Consequently, *Shekhinah* moved to the Left—the side of harsh Judgment—and manifested this quality, beginning to avenge the murder of the priests by killing Saul along with his sons

and many Israelites in the battle with the Philistines. See 1 Samuel 31.

The sin of Saul's massacre of the priests of Nob dangled over the nation until the day that Sennacherib arrived there. (See above, note 165.) The Assyrian king's terrifying threat was a manifestation of the harsh Judgment of *Shekhinah*, who had been deprived of Her priests—symbolizing *Ḥesed*, on the Right—and had clung to *Din* (harsh Judgment), on the Left. She Herself was *this day*, standing poised *at Nob* to requite the sin of the original Nob massacre. Thus, the anonymous stranger provides a kabbalistic twist to the Talmudic interpretation of the verse.

After the fall of Shiloh, Nob apparently became the chief sanctuary. On Nob and its destruction, see *Seder Olam Rabbah* 13; *Bereshit Rabbah* 54:4; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:9; *Midrash Shemu'el* 12:1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 8. On *Shekhinah* as *Matronita*, see above, note 157. On *Shekhinah* as Assembly of Israel and *day*, see the preceding note.

168. ***Gibeah of Saul fled…*** As the invader approached Jerusalem, the residents of this city fled. According to the anonymous stranger, their flight from the city named after King Saul was ultimately due to Saul's grave sin. The stranger concludes with an analogy between the biblical crime and the more recent one: just as Saul's murder of the priests of Nob demanded requital, so too with the murder of the wise priest by the ignoramus. See above, note 163.

169. **that he is a great man** Rabbi Yose had actually said, "Maybe he is a great man." See above at note 160. Here, as Rabbi Yose recalls what he said, several manuscripts preserving an older version (V7, V8, C9) read "that he is a great man," while other manuscripts (02, O17, T1, R1, V3, V16), followed by the printed editions, read "(that) maybe he is a great man." I prefer the older version, which seems to reflect human nature.

170. **He opened…** Rabbi Yose quotes an appropriate verse, celebrating his discovery of the stranger's wisdom.

His encounter with the wise stranger is a kind of revelation because, according to rabbinic tradition, “whoever welcomes [literally, receives the face of] the wise is considered as if he welcomes *Shekhinah*.”

The *Zohar* transforms the rabbinic simile into an actual description of the *Ḥavrayya* (Companions), who “are called ‘the face of *Shekhinah*’ because *Shekhinah* is hidden within them. She is concealed, they are revealed” (*Zohar* 2:163b).

See *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Yitro*) 1; JT *Eruvin* 5:1, 22b; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 27; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:5; *Zohar* 1:9a; 2:5a (*MhN*); 3:6b, 148a, 298a; *ZḤ* 11c (*MhN*). Cf. Genesis 33:10.

171. ***Of David, a psalm… A psalm of David…*** These titles, whose precise meaning is unclear, alternate in Psalms. The interpretation formulated here is a variation on the rabbinic version in BT *Pesaḥim* 117a: “לדוד מזמור (*Le-David mizmor*), *To David, a psalm,* indicates that *Shekhinah* rested upon him and then he exclaimed a song. מזמור לדוד (*Mizmor le-David*), *A psalm, to David*, indicates that he exclaimed a song and then *Shekhinah* rested upon him.” (The preposition ל [*le*] can mean either “of” or “to.”)

Here, according to the anonymous stranger, the wording לדוד מזמור (*Le-David mizmor*), *Of David, a psalm*, implies that David was aroused to sing about *Shekhinah* (Assembly of Israel), who is also known as *psalm*. The alternative wording—מזמור לדוד (*Mizmor le-David*), *A psalm of David*—indicates a psalm concerning David himself. Since the psalm under discussion opens with the first wording, its subject is *Shekhinah*, as the stranger proceeds to explain.

See *Midrash Tehillim* 24:1, 3; Rashi on Psalms 23:1; Jacob bar Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 92; Todros Abulafia, *Sha’ar ha-Razim*, 48; *Zohar* 1:39b, 67a; 2:140a, 170a. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital; *MmD*. The full verse in Psalms reads: *Of David, a psalm. The earth and her fullness are YHVH’s, the world and those who dwell in her*.

172. ***The earth and her fullness…*** *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *earth*) is joined to *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*). *Her fullness* refers to the angels inhabiting Her, and more expansively, to all of existence, which is pervaded by the Divine Presence: She fills the world, and all creatures fill Her.

On מלוא (*melo*), *fullness*, as referring to the angels, see Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 69. See *OY*. On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 1:67a; 2:22b; 3:45b.

173. **תבל (*Tevel*), *The world…*** The earthly world is linked to *Shekhinah*, who is known as (mild) Judgment. (*Shekhinah* Herself is linked to *Din* [harsh Judgment]). She administers divine Judgment to all inhabitants and nations.

The verse in Psalm 9 is understood to mean that *Tif'eret judges the world* through *Shekhinah*, who is also known as *righteousness*. See above, p. 76 at n. 23. On *righteousness* as Judgment, see *Zohar* 3:85b.

On *tevel* and the various other strata of earth, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit* 9 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:24); *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:32–33); *Zohar* 1:9b, 39b–40a (*Heikh*), 54b, 157a; 2:30b; 3:9b–10a; *ZḤ* 9b–c, 12a (*MhN*), 87b (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:11; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 37.

174. **Pharaoh imbibed from this Judgment…** From *Shekhinah*. Then the heavenly prince appointed over Egypt was eliminated, and consequently the Egyptian forces below—who drowned in the Red Sea through the power of *Shekhinah*, the supernal sea.

On *the wheel of his chariots*, see above, notes 124, 139, 141–42.

175. **בים סוף (*be-yam suf*)…סופא (*sofa*)…** *Shekhinah* is symbolized by ים סוף (*yam suf*), *the Red Sea* [literally, *the Sea of Reeds*], because She is סופא (*sofa*), "end," of rungs, consummation of the ten *sefirot*.

See Jacob ben Sheshet, *Ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon*, 381; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 14:21. Cf. *Zohar* 1:208a.

176. **בכבדות (*bikhvedut*), *with difficulty…*** The root כבד (*kvd*) means "heavy." The repetition of this root links Pharaoh's conduct with his punishment: because he hardened his heart, he was treated harshly by God.

See Rashi on Exodus 14:25; cf. *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:25; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 23.

See BT *Makkot* 10b: "Rabbah son of Bar Ḥana said in the name of Rav Huna (some say, Rav Huna said in the name of Rabbi El'azar), 'From the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings, it can be demonstrated that one is led on the path one wishes to take.'"

On this principle, see *Zohar* 1:53b–54a, 195b, 198b; 3:47a, 207a. The full verse in Exodus 14 reads: *He removed the wheel of their* [literally, *his*] *chariots, causing them* [literally, *him*] *to drive with difficulty, and Egypt said, "Let me flee from before Israel, for YHVH is fighting for them against Egypt!"* The verse in Exodus 9 reads: *Pharaoh's heart hardened, and he did not send the people free*.

177. ***Egypt said*—the prince…** Their heavenly prince, named *Egypt*.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 15:15; 21:5; 22:2; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:22; above, note 174. For the full verse, see the preceding note.

178. **For since he was already removed…** Apparently, Rabbi Yose interprets the phrase *Let me flee from before Israel* as implying that until that moment the speaker (presumably the heavenly prince of Egypt) was still pursuing Israel. But how could this be, since the heavenly prince had already been removed? Rabbi Yose solves this difficulty by explaining that *Egypt* can refer to both the people and their heavenly prince ("certainly it embraces all"). In this verse both senses apply: *Egypt* [Pharaoh's armies] *said, "Let me flee from before Israel, for YHVH is fighting for them against Egypt* [their heavenly prince]!" The Egyptians tried to keep pursuing the Israelites, but

since their heavenly power had been defeated, their own power vanished.

Just as *Egypt* can refer to the heavenly prince, so can the phrase *king of Egypt*—when the name Pharaoh is not specified. See *Zohar* 2:17a (*MhN*), 19a–b (*MhN*).

179. **When this Assembly of Israel arouses…** When *Shekhinah* arouses, She remains linked with numerous powers, including the heavenly princes of the nations; but the people of Israel are linked to Her on a higher level, since they participate in Her union with *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel), symbolized by the Tree of Life. When Israel arouse spiritually, or in repentance, the nations that dominate them are overwhelmed. The closing phrase —"from those ruling over them"—apparently means "through the defeat of their heavenly princes."

On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18. On Israel's link with the trunk of the Tree, see *Bahir* 67 (98); *Zohar* 2:58b–59a. Cf. 1:193a–b.

180. **those kingdoms were broken…** Heavenly princes of other nations and their respective nations below, who had been allies of Egypt. See above at notes 81, 139–41.

Apparently, Rabbi Yose understands the phrase במצרים נלחם להם (*nilḥam la-hem be-mitsrayim*) not according to its simple sense —*is fighting for them* [i.e., for Israel] *against Egypt*— but rather as *is fighting them* [i.e., the other heavenly princes and their nations] *along with* [the heavenly prince of] *Egypt*.

See Galante; Soncino. Most of the manuscripts support the reading מלבוותא (*malkhevata*), "kingdoms." Other witnesses (V3, OY, printed editions) read instead: מלתתא (*miletatta*), "below," referring to the Egyptians. In that case, Rabbi Yose's interpretation of the verse would be: *YHVH is fighting for them* [for the harsh enslavement imposed upon Israel] *against* [the heavenly prince of] *Egypt*.

181. **Matnitin** "Our Mishnah." The *Matnitin* and *Tosefta* of the *Zohar* consist mostly of anonymous enigmatic revelations often addressed to the Companions. The terseness of these passages recalls the style of the Mishnah, and they appear distinct from the *Zohar*'s running commentary on the Torah. I have included this passage of *Matnitin* here because it appears here in numerous manuscripts.

This passage concludes below at note 188. See Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 216; Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 163–214.

182. **Before pure air settled...** This passage describes how the flow of emanation begins to issue. The symbolism is cryptic, and here I simply clarify some of the key elements. For a range of interpretations, see *OY*; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

אוירא דביא (*Aveira dakhya*), "pure air" (or "ether"), is a primordial divine potency. Before this "pure air" settled, the primeval stones through which waters of emanation would flow were clogged. The two triads apparently allude to the triadic structure of the *sefirot*, not yet manifested ("sunken").

On *aveira dakhya*, "pure air," see *Zohar* 3:135b (*IR*), 292b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 70a, 73b, 74b (all *ShS*). Cf. 1:15a, 16b, 32b; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 331–47; Vol. 1, pp. 108–9, n. 11. Cf. *Sefer Yetsirah* 2:6: "Out of chaos He formed substance, making what is not into what is. He hewed enormous pillars out of *avir* (air, ether) that cannot be grasped."

On water issuing from stones, see the definition of בהו (*bohu*), *empty* [or: *void*] (Genesis 1:2) in BT *Ḥagigah* 12a: "*Bohu*—the slimy stones sunk in the abyss, from which water issues."

183. **By seventy-two letters...** The verse introducing this piece of *Matnitin* (Exodus 14:19) contains seventy-two Hebrew letters, which form part of a complex divine name that is explained below (see notes 216, 223–26). Through the potency of these letters, the waters return to their places. The flint, engraved with the seventy-two letters,

pierces the stones, facilitating the measured flow of emanation; then the waters gather together.

According to a rabbinic tradition, at Creation God sealed the watery depths with the Foundation Stone, engraved with the divine Name, thereby ensuring that the waters would not rise and inundate the world.

Cf. the tradition reported in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan (BT *Sukkah* 53a–b): "When David dug the hollows [beneath the site of the Temple], the abyss arose and threatened to drown the world…. [David] inscribed the [divine] Name on a potsherd and cast it into the abyss, and it subsided…."

See JT *Sanhedrin* 10:2, 29a; *Midrash Shemu'el* 26; Gaster, ed., *Sefer ha-Ma'asiyyot*, 113–14; *Zohar* 3:198b; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:258, n. 70; Liebes, *Torat ha-Yetsirah*, 177–89. On the Foundation Stone, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 28:30; *Targum*, Song of Songs 4:12; *Zohar* 2:91b, 152a; *ZḤ* 76b (*MhN, Rut*); Vol. 2, p. 8, n. 53; Vol. 3, p. 396, n. 470; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:14–16, n. 39; Noy, "Even ha-Shetiyyah"; Heinemann, "David ha-Melekh," 32, n. 21.

"Flint" renders צרורא (*tserora*), "pebble, stone."

184. **world began to divide** The divine realm began to divide, apparently into male and female halves.

185. **another flint…** Perhaps symbolizing *Binah*. As the waters issue from Her, they divide and then converge, before emptying into *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by "the flashing blade of the whirling sword." Her "flaming coals" represent forces of Judgment within Her.

North and south symbolize respectively *Gevurah* and *Ḥesed*. On the image of the whirling sword, see Genesis 3:24, describing the expulsion of Adam from the Garden of Eden: *He drove out the human and placed east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim and the flame* [or: *blade*] *of the whirling sword to guard the way to the Tree of Life*. See *Targum Onqelos* on the verse.

186. **single column is inserted…** Extending from the sea of *Shekhinah* to the higher sefirotic realms. Through this

column rises the rung of *Yesod* (messenger of *Binah*), and He gazes out at the forces (ships and fish) populating *Shekhinah* and conveying Her power to the world.

On the ships and fish of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 132. On the image of inserting a column into the sea, cf. the rabbinic tradition of Gabriel inserting a reed into the sea. See JT *Avodah Zarah* 1:2, 39c; BT *Shabbat* 56b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:6; Scholem.

187. **When that rung descends…** When *Yesod* descends through the sefirotic column, He is accompanied by a thousand forces of *Ḥesed* and a thousand of *Gevurah*, as He prepares to unite with *Shekhinah*, like a king sitting on his throne.

The final sentence may mean: When the ships and fish sail the sea of *Shekhinah*—conveying divine compassion and judgment—through the power of *Yesod* She sets out and returns. For various interpretations, see *OY*; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

188. **Let those who have eyes…** The herald addresses various groups of angels, including those whose eyes see all that happens in the world. These heavenly beings prepare for *Shekhinah* (known as both "sea" and *angel of Elohim*) to journey.

On angels covering their faces, see Isaiah 6:2. On *Shekhinah* as *angel of Elohim*, see above, note 84. The verse in Exodus, which frames this passage of *Matnitin*, reads: *The angel of Elohim who was going before the camp of Israel journeyed* [or: *moved*] *and went behind them*.

189. ***She is like the ships…*** *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) conveys the riches of emanation from the far reaches of the higher *sefirot*, specifically from *Ḥokhmah* (known as *afar*). *Shekhinah* is also known as *the name of YHVH*, revealing the divine identity.

On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18. On *Ḥokhmah* as *afar*, see *Zohar* 1:107a; 3:20b, 60a, 90a; above, p. 57, n. 252.

190. **by one rung resting upon her…** *Yesod* (also known as Righteous One), who channels the streams of emanation to the sea of *Shekhinah*.

The full verse in Ecclesiastes reads: *All the streams flow to the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place the streams flow, there they continue* [or: *return*] *to flow*—or: *to the place* [from] *which the streams flow, there they flow back again*. The simple sense of the verse may reflect the popular belief that the water flowing into the sea from rivers flows back to those rivers through tunnels. Here, Rabbi Ḥiyya understands it to mean that the water continually flows from "the supernal site" of *Ḥokhmah, Binah*, or both, through the rung (or *place*) of *Yesod* into the sea of *Shekhinah*.

See above, p. 120 and nn. 191–93. On Righteous One as a name of *Yesod*, see above, p. 78 and n. 30.

191. ***There ships sail…*** The full verse reads: *There ships sail, Leviathan whom You formed to play with*. Rabbi Yehudah understands the verse to mean: Angelic ships sail the sea of *Shekhinah* until She joins in erotic play with *Yesod*, symbolized by *Leviathan*. See above, p. 235 and n. 133.

192. **Above, higher above…** Alluding to the union of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, which is everlasting, unlike the inconstant union of *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, which depends in part on the virtuous conduct of human beings.

On the perpetual embrace of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, see *Zohar* 2:11b, 55a, 56a; 3:4a, 11a, 61b, 77b, 102a, 120a.

193. **world that is coming…** עלמא דאתי (*Alma de-atei*) is the Aramaic equivalent of the rabbinic Hebrew העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*), "the world that is coming." This concept is often understood as referring to the hereafter and is usually translated as "the world to come." From another point of view, however, "the world that is coming" already exists, occupying another dimension. See *Tanḥuma, Vayiqra* 8: "The wise call it *ha-olam ha-ba* not because it does not exist now, but for us today in this world it is still to come." Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 8:8; and

Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, 37: "'The world to come' does not succeed 'this world' in time, but exists from eternity as a reality outside and above time, to which the soul ascends."

In Kabbalah "the world that is coming" often refers to *Binah*, the continuous source of emanation. See *Zohar* 3:290b (*IZ*): "the world that is coming, constantly coming, never ceasing." See above, p. 130, n. 223; *OY*.

Here Rabbi Yitsḥak's point is that a truly virtuous person attains the realm of *Binah*—the world that is constantly coming and flowing—and participates in the perpetual divine union.

194. **But look! From here…** Rabbi Yehudah returns to the verse in Psalms, where he finds another reference to the lower sefirotic union—between *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*. *Yesod* is symbolized not only by *Leviathan*, but by the word זה (*zeh*), which usually means "this (masculine)" but in this verse *whom*. His partner, *Shekhinah*, is known as זאת (*zot*), "this (feminine)," perhaps because She is the Divine Presence, constantly right here.

See above at note 133. On *zeh* and *zot*, see above, p. 54 and n. 240; p. 170 and n. 108; p. 173 and n. 123.

195. **this of Rabbi Yehudah's…** His precise reading of the wording *Leviathan* זה (*zeh*), *whom*.

196. **has prepared everything…*delight upon*…** The verse in Isaiah is often understood to mean *Then you will delight in YHVH,* but Rabbi Abba reads the phrase על יהוה (*al YHVH*) hyperliterally: *upon* [or: *above*] *YHVH*—alluding to the realm of *Binah*, the world that is coming, which lies *above Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*). There the righteous will revel.

According to rabbinic tradition, in the time to come the righteous will feast at a banquet, and their main course will be Leviathan. See BT *Bava Batra* 74b (quoted above, pp. 150–51, n. 45).

On the hyperliteral reading of the verse in Isaiah, see *Zohar* 1:216a, 219a; 2:83a, 88a–b; 3:94b. On *Binah* as the

world that is coming, see above, note 193.

197. **How many thousands…** Countless angels serving beneath *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Matronita*.

On "masters of eyes," see above, note 188. "Masters of trumpeting" renders מארי דיבבא (*marei diyvava*), "masters of trumpeting (or wailing)." See *Targum Onqelos*, Leviticus 23:24; 25:9; Numbers 29:1; *Zohar* 1:92a; 2:4a (*Mat*), 122b; 3:4a, 60a, 64b, 132a (*IR*), 133a (*IR*), 231b, 258b, 293a (*IZ*).

מטרוניתא (*Matronita*) is an aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron, married woman, noble lady," and is often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the Queen.

198. ***Matronita* has armed camps…** Angels protecting Her from demonic forces.

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:398, n. 97. On the number sixty, see Song of Songs 3:7, quoted below. On "six wings," see Isaiah 6:2.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *He drove out the human and placed east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim and the flame of the whirling sword to guard the way to the Tree of Life*. See above, note 185.

199. ***the way to the Tree of Life…*** *Shekhinah* leads to *Tif'eret*, who is known as the Tree of Life. See *Zohar* 1:237a.

200. ***bed of Solomon…*** *Shekhinah*, who is wedded to *Tif'eret*, symbolized by *Solomon*. *Tif'eret*'s full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel), so He is "Israel above." *Shekhinah* is identified with *the angel of Elohim*.

On *Shekhinah* as "bed" and *bed of Solomon*, see above, note 129. On *Shekhinah* as *angel of Elohim*, see above, note 84.

Song of Songs 3:8 reads in full: *All of them skilled with a sword, expert in war, each with his sword on his thigh because of terror in the night*. For the full verse in Exodus 14, see above, note 188.

201. **Now, is She called… *angel of Elohim*?…** How can *Shekhinah* be referred to merely as angel? Rabbi Abba answers by gradually explaining the meaning of מלאך (*mal'akh*).

Shekhinah is symbolized by palace, city, and Jerusalem. Just as one who seeks the presence of God in the Temple would enter there only through the city of Jerusalem, so one who seeks the presence of King *Tif'eret* (*YHVH*) can enter His presence only through the holy city (and gate) of *Shekhinah*.

On the image of heavenly Jerusalem, see *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 1: "There is a Jerusalem above aligned with Jerusalem below. Out of His love for the one below, He fashioned another above.... He has sworn that His presence will not enter the heavenly Jerusalem until the earthly Jerusalem is rebuilt."

See Revelation 21:2; *Targum Yonatan*, Psalms 122:3; BT *Ta'anit* 5a; *Zohar* 1:1b, 80b–81a (*ST*), 114a (*MhN*), 129a, 183b, 231a; 2:29b, 38a; 3:15b, 68b, 147b. On *Shekhinah* as *gate*, see *Zohar* 1:7b, 11b; 3:95a; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 4b.

202. **Every mission...** *Shekhinah* conveys everything from the divine realm to the worlds below; conversely, She transmits human prayer and aspiration from earth to heaven. In this sense, She is מלאך האלהים (*mal'akh ha-Elohim*), understood now not as *the angel of God*, but as *the messenger* [or: *agent*] *of God*.

On the phrase "Israel above," see above, note 200. The phrase *And YHVH* alludes to *Shekhinah* along with *Tif'eret*. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 51:2, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Wherever it is said *And YHVH*, this implies: He and His court." In Kabbalah this court symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who derives from *Din* (Judgment) and pronounces the divine decree, so the phrase *And YHVH* encompasses "He [*Tif'eret*, known as *YHVH*] and His court [or here, His agent, namely *Shekhinah*]." See above, note 65; Naḥmanides on Exodus 13:21; *Zohar* 3:191b.

The full verse in Exodus 13 reads: *And YHVH was going before them by day in a column of cloud to lead them on the way, and by night in a column of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and by night*.

203. **is it an honor for the King…** Shouldn't the King Himself wage war?

On the parable, cf. *Bahir* 43 (63): "A parable. This can be compared to a king residing within the innermost chambers, thirty-two in all, each with its own path. Now, is it fitting for this king that everyone enter his chambers by his paths? Certainly not! But is it fitting for him not to display his pearls and hidden treasures, his precious objects and brocades? Certainly not! What did he do? He designated the daughter and included all the paths in her and in her garments. Whoever wishes to enter, let him gaze here!"

Cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:10; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:10; *Zohar* 2:22b. "Noble lady" renders מטרוניתא (*matronita*). See above, note 197.

204. **Similarly, the blessed Holy One…** Similarly King *Tif'eret* entrusted everything to *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) and designated Her as *Guardian of Israel*—that is, Guardian of *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel).

In its simple sense, the full verse in Leviticus describes how Aaron should prepare to enter the Holy of Holies: *With this shall Aaron enter the holy zone, with a bull from the herd for an offense offering* [or: *purification offering*] *and a ram for an ascent offering*. Here, Rabbi Abba interprets it as: *With Shekhinah*—known as זאת (*zot*), *this—shall Aaron enter*…. One may enter the holy zone only with, or through, *Shekhinah*. On *Shekhinah* as *zot*, see above, note 194; p. 170, n. 108. On the kabbalistic interpretation of this verse, see *Zohar* 1:72a; 2:57a; 3:8b, 31a, 37b, 53b, 56b, 58b–59a, 60b.

On placing the weapons in the hands of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 3:42b, 150a, 269b; *ZḤ* 7b. On *Shekhinah* as *bed of Solomon*, see above, notes 129, 200.

The context in Song of Songs (6:8–9) reads: *Sixty queens are they, and eighty concubines, and damsels without number. One she is, my dove, my perfect one; one*

she is to her mother, pure she is to the one who bore her. The phrase *her mother* is understood as an allusion to *Binah*.

The earlier context in Song of Songs (3:7–8) reads: *Behold the bed of Solomon! Sixty warriors surrounding her of the warriors of Israel. All of them skilled with a sword, expert in war, each with his sword on his thigh because of terror in the night*. See above at note 200.

205. ***The angel of Elohim…moved…*** *Shekhinah* is *the angel* [or: *messenger, agent*] *of Elohim* (see above, note 202). At this crucial moment, as the Egyptians advanced against the Israelites from the rear, She moved behind Her people to command and inspire all the forces entrusted to Her and to confront the enemy, who was bolstered by powers from above.

206. **ruling prince appointed over Egypt…** Egypt's heavenly prince was aided by Samael, who lent him six hundred chariots, packed with numerous heavenly princes of other nations. The apparent redundancy of the verse in Exodus (*six hundred select chariots and all the chariots of Egypt*) yields a new meaning: *six hundred select* heavenly powers *and all the chariots of Egypt*.

See above, p. 221 and nn. 80–81. On Samael's role, cf. Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 14:25.

207. **When did the blessed Holy One requite Samael?…** At the Red Sea, only the Egyptians and their heavenly prince were defeated. The other heavenly princes were vanquished by *Shekhinah* later, when Deborah and Barak conquered Sisera the Canaanite.

Here *the primeval river* may allude to the river of fire that consumes the heavenly princes of other nations. See above, pp. 21–22 and n. 81.

On the battle of Sisera, see Judges 4; BT *Pesaḥim* 118b; *Zohar* 3:269b; above, note 81.

208. **in the time to come…** At the end of days, God will wreak vengeance upon Israel's enemy, Edom, who in

rabbinic literature often symbolizes the Roman Empire, and in medieval Jewish literature, Christianity.

In quoting the verse from Isaiah, Rabbi Abba may be alluding to *Shekhinah*, who is known as *I*. The full verse reads: *Who is this coming from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah—majestic in His attire, striding in the greatness of His strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save."* Bozrah was the ancient capital of Edom.

209. **Who is this *column of cloud*?...**. The cloud often signifies the Divine Presence. See, e.g., Exodus 13:21–22; 16:10; 19:9, 16; 24:15–16; 33:9–10; 40:34–38.

On Moses entering the cloud at Sinai, see Exodus 24:18: *Moses entered the cloud and went up the mountain*.

Exodus 14:19 reads in full: *The angel of Elohim who was going before the camp of Israel moved and went behind them, and the column of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them*.

210. ***YHVH was going before them...*** Rabbi Abba indicates that in this verse the cloud is associated with *YHVH* (symbolizing the male partner of *Shekhinah*) and therefore alludes to a potency above *Shekhinah*. He contends that the *column of cloud* assists *Yesod* (Righteous One and cosmic column), who unites with *Shekhinah*. This cloud (along with *Yesod*) derives from *Ḥesed*, which is symbolized by day, while the *column of fire* derives from *Gevurah*, symbolized by night.

On the link between *Ḥesed* and *Yesod*, see above, p. 217 and n. 61. On *Ḥesed* as a name of *Yesod*, see *Zohar* 3:142a (*IR*). On *Yesod* as Righteous One and cosmic column (or pillar), see BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; above, p. 78 and n. 30.

The full verse in Exodus 13 reads: *YHVH was going before them by day in a column of cloud to lead them on the way, and by night in a column of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and by night*.

211. ***The column of cloud by day*—Abraham...** Rabbi Shim'on identifies *the column of cloud* with Abraham (who symbolizes *Ḥesed*) and *the column of fire* with Isaac (who

symbolizes *Gevurah*). Still, he supports Rabbi Abba's association of the cloud with *Yesod*, since through the rung of *Yesod* both *cloud* and *fire* (*Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*) appear in *Shekhinah*.

See above, pp. 218–19 and nn. 66, 71. The full verse reads: *The column of cloud would not withdraw by day nor the column of fire by night from before the people*.

212. ***The angel of Elohim…moved…*** *Shekhinah* moved from the domain of *Ḥesed* to *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment), because now was the time to execute judgment upon the Egyptians. *Ḥesed* is pictured as *before, Gevurah* as *behind*.

On *Shekhinah* as *angel of Elohim*, see above, note 84.

213. **the moon became completely full…** *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the moon, was filled with the radiance of seventy divine names (or powers) from each of three higher *sefirot*: *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. "Father" alludes to *Ḥokhmah*, who illumines *Ḥesed* from above on the right side of the sefirotic tree.

On the seventy names of God, see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12; Naḥmanides, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:135; *Zohar* 1:5b. For various lists of these names, see *Alfa Beita de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:350–51); *Shir ha-Shirim Zuta* 1:1; *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 46:8; *Ba'al ha-Turim* on Numbers 11:16.

214. **On the second side…third side…** From the second side (on the left), *Shekhinah* was arrayed in sixty powers of *Gevurah*—plus ten of Her own, issuing from *Binah*, the Divine Mother.

In the middle ("the third side") stands King *Tif'eret*, whose name means "beauty" and who conveys seventy royal garments to *Shekhinah*. *Tif'eret* is pictured as the Holy Son of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* (Father and Mother). He harmonizes the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*.

The image of "sixty lashes of fire" derives from rabbinic literature. In BT *Ḥagigah* 15a, Metatron (the chief angel) is lashed with sixty strokes of fire to demonstrate that he is

subservient to God. See BT *Yoma* 77a, *Bava Metsi'a* 85b; *Zohar* 1:223b; 2:66b–67a; 3:60a, 170b. Cf. the reference to *sixty warriors*, above at note 204.

215. **From the side of *Ḥesed*...** Each set of seventy is augmented by two.

The total of seventy-two alludes to the complex divine name described below and also to the seventy members of the Sanhedrin plus two scribes or witnesses. See M *Sanhedrin* 4:3; *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*); 2:251a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 61d (*ShS*).

The "two colors" associated with *Tif'eret* may refer to the colors of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* (white and red, respectively), which are blended in *Tif'eret*. לאתפארא (*Le-itpa'ara*), "to be glorified," is a play on תפארת (*Tif'eret*), "beauty."

216. **This place is engraved...** *Shekhinah* is engraved by three sets of seventy-two letters, constituting an immense divine name. Each set issues from one of the members of the sefirotic triad *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who symbolize respectively the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and together constitute the divine Chariot. *Shekhinah* Herself is often pictured as the fourth component of this chariot, which serves as a throne for the highest level of divinity.

This complex divine name derives from the description of the splitting of the Red Sea here in Exodus (14:19–21). Remarkably, each of these three verses contains 72 Hebrew letters. The name is composed of seventy-two triads (totaling 216 letters), formed according to the following pattern: the first letter of the first verse, the last letter of the second verse, the first letter of the third verse (forming the first triad); the second letter of the first verse, the penultimate letter of the second verse, the second letter of the third verse (the second triad); etc. The three individual verses and the resulting name appear below at notes 223–26.

Here Rabbi Shim'on links the first verse (whose letters are inscribed in their normal order) with *Ḥesed*, which flows

straight. The letters of the second verse are inscribed in reverse order, symbolizing the contrary quality of *Gevurah*, or *Din* (harsh Judgment). The third verse (whose letters are inscribed in order) is linked with *Tif'eret*, who harmonizes the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. On His "colors," see the preceding note.

On this name of seventy-two triads, see Hai Gaon, in Lewin, ed., *Otsar ha-Ge'onim, Ḥagigah*, 23; Rashi on BT *Sukkah* 45a, s.v. *ani*; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 14:21; *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 14:21 (with vocalized triads); Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 14:19; *Bahir* 76 (107), 79 (110); Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, *Peirushei Siddur ha-Tefillah*, 1:131–32; idem [pseud.], *Peirush ha-Roqeaḥ al ha-Torah*, Exodus 14:19–21; *Sod Shem ben Ayin-Bet* (from the *Iyyun* Circle), Florence MS 44:14, 2–10; Naḥmanides, introduction to Commentary on the Torah, 6–7; idem, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:168; Abulafia, *Ḥayyei ha-Olam ha-Ba*, 52–57 and passim; idem, *Sefer ha-Ḥesheq*, 24–25; *Zohar* 1:7b, 17a, 79b; 2:115a (*RM*), 132b, 269b–270a; 3:34b, 73a, 150b–151a, 219b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 76b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 148–49; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 14:21; 15:3; Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim*, 21:5; *Sefer Razi'el*, 24b, 28a–29b, 30b–31b, 40b, 43a; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 95–97; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 14:19–21, pp. 284–86; Kaplan, *Meditation and Kabbalah*, 93–106; Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, 23–24, 35–38; idem, *Golem*, 98–101; Verman, *Books of Contemplation*, 162; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 235–36; Kanarfogel, *Peering through the Lattices*, 144; Huss, "All You Need Is LAV," 612–14. On the potency of the name of seventy-two triads, see *OY*, 37b.

There are various other traditions about a divine name of seventy-two letters or components, or a name equivalent numerically to seventy-two. For example, according to *Bereshit Rabbah* 44:19 (in the name of Rabbi Avin), God redeemed the Israelites from Egypt by His seventy-two-

letter name. See Theodor's note ad loc.; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:2; Ibn Ezra (short) on Exodus 3:13; Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 14:19; 33:21; Jacob ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush Merkevet Yeḥezqel*, 1; Naḥmanides on Numbers 11:16; *Zohar* 2:58a; *Minḥat Shai* on Ezekiel 1:1; Urbach, *The Sages*, 1:130–31; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 342; Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, 105; Verman, *Books of Contemplation*, 52, 63; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 235–36.

On the patriarchs and the Chariot, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6: "Resh Lakish said, 'The patriarchs themselves constitute the Chariot.'" See above, note 66.

217. **These third letters...** If the letters of the third verse (Exodus 14:21) represent *Tif'eret*, who mediates between *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, why aren't half of these letters written in normal sequence and half in reverse?

In the verse from Psalms the word מישרים (*meisharim*), *equity*, derives from the root ישר (*yshr*), "to be straight." The verse from Exodus 26 describes the central wooden crossbar of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. Here, this description pertains to *Tif'eret* (the blessed Holy One), who, as the central *sefirah*, spans *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. Rabbi Yitsḥak indicates that *the central bar* is Jacob; yet "all is one," because Jacob symbolizes *Tif'eret*.

On the verse in Exodus 26, see *Zohar* 1:1b (spanning *Binah* and *Shekhinah*), 148b (*ST*), 224a; 2:175b; 3:186a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 7; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 41–42 (49–51).

218. **he judges favorably and unfavorably...** This king always maintains a shining countenance, but sometimes he acquits and sometimes he condemns.

219. **Similarly, the blessed Holy One...** *Tif'eret* balances the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Din* (Judgment), yet He maintains a radiant countenance. Consequently, the third verse (Exodus 14:21) is written in normal sequence

though it combines the opposite tendencies of the preceding two verses.

220. **From here…** Rabbi Yehudah offers a proof-text to explain why half of the letters of the third verse are not written in reverse order. *Tif'eret* (*YHVH*) encompasses right and left (*Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*); He does not "diverge"—reverse Himself or divide Himself. Consequently, His verse—linking both of the opposite preceding verses—"appears straight," all its letters "written in their order."

The verse in Malachi reads: לא שניתי (*Lo shaniti*), *I have not changed* [or: *diverged*]. Here, Rabbi Yehudah may be associating *shaniti* with שני (*shenei*), "two": "I have not divided Myself in two." In the paraphrase of the verse, a number of early manuscripts (C9, V3, V7, V8) read לא דליגנא (*la deleigna*), "I have not skipped," instead of לא פליגנא (*la peleigna*), "I have not separated." See *OY*; Galante; *Sullam; MmD*.

221. ***The angel of Elohim…*** The first of the three verses, linked to *Ḥesed* on the right.

The phrase "*Ḥesed* to Abraham" derives from Micah 7:20 and often serves as a proof-text for the association between the *sefirah* and the patriarch.

222. **When the Holy Ancient One…** When the primordial *sefirah, Keter*, emanates to the King (the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, clustered around *Tif'eret*), He conveys to Him holy crowns, composed of the letters discussed above. *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the three patriarchs) are each crowned by seventy-two of these letters (i.e., by one of the three verses in Exodus 14:19–21). Empowered by this sefirotic triad, *Shekhinah* (*Matronita*) sets out on Her journeys, now crowned by the Name composed of all those letters.

On *Matronita* as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 197.

223. **ויסע מלאך האלהים…** The first of the three verses (Exodus 14:19) is arranged in columns, to be read from above to below, beginning at the top right. This verse

corresponds to *Ḥesed* and, although appearing in columns, proceeds in normal sequence. See above at note 216.

In English the verse reads: *The angel of Elohim who was going before the camp of Israel moved and went behind them, and the column of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them*.

224. **ויבא בין מחנה...** The second of the three verses (Exodus 14:20) appears in two alternate arrangements. The first is in columns and can be construed in two ways. From above to below, beginning at the top left, the verse reads backward. Or, the verse proceeds in order but from below to above, beginning at the bottom right.

The second arrangement is in horizontal rows, with the verse spelled from left to right, beginning at the bottom left (or spelled backward, beginning at the top right and reading right to left).

This verse corresponds to *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment), and the reverse arrangement reflects the harsh quality of Judgment. See above at note 216. The phrase "left contained in right" alludes to the submission of *Gevurah* to *Ḥesed*.

In English the verse reads: *And it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel, and there was the cloud and the dark, and it lit up the night, and one did not draw near the other all night*.

225. **ויט משה את ידו...** The last of the three verses (Exodus 14:21) is likewise arranged in columns, to be read from above to below, beginning at the top right. This verse corresponds to *Tif'eret*, who embraces *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. Although appearing in columns, the letters proceed in normal sequence. See above at note 216.

In English the verse reads: *And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and YHVH drove the sea with a mighty east wind all night, and He turned the sea into dry ground, and the waters were split*.

226. **Afterward, patriarchs conjoin…** Each of the three sets of 72 letters adorns one of the patriarchs, who in turn each symbolize one of the three *sefirot*: *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. Now all 216 letters combine into seventy-two triads, according to the formula described above, note 216. The triads proceed from right to left, beginning at the top right. Together they constitute the complex divine name through whose power the sea was split.

On the patriarchs as the Chariot, see above, notes 66, 216.

227. **Shofar Blasts of Rav of Babylonia…** Part of the liturgy of the *musaf* service of Rosh Hashanah, composed by Rav, a third-century Babylonian *amora* who studied for many years with Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi in Palestine and then, in 219, returned to Babylonia. This service features multiple soundings of the shofar.

For the term "Shofar Blasts of Rav," see JT *Rosh Hashanah* 1:2, 57a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:1.

Here Rabbi Yeisa, a disciple of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai (who lived in the middle of the second century), quotes Rav, who lived in the following century. *OY, Haggahot Maharḥu*, and Galante try to resolve this anachronism, while some later printed editions of the *Zohar* replace Rav with Rav Hamnuna Sava, who is often cited in the *Zohar*—although the historical Hamnuna also lived in the third century! See above, note 120; Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*.

228. **Three times ובכן…** Reflecting a Sephardic custom on the High Holy Days of reciting three paragraphs beginning with ובכן (*uvkhen*), "And therefore," followed by a fourth paragraph beginning with ואז צדיקים (*ve-az tsaddiqim*), "And then, the righteous." Here, the three *uvkhens* correspond to the sefirotic triad (of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*) and to the three verses of seventy-two letters each, based

on the fact that the *gimatriyya* (numerical value) of בכן (*be-khen*) is seventy-two.

In a responsum falsely attributed to Hai Gaon but apparently composed by the author(s) of the *Zohar*, this custom is attributed to Rav and related to a divine name and to the triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. See *Sha'arei Teshuvah (Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim)*, par. 297; Galante; *MmD*. On the authorship of such responsa, see Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 231.

On the custom of three *uvkhens*, see Abraham ben Nathan ha-Yarḥi, *Sefer ha-Manhig*, 1:305; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 33–34. Cf. Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 149–51. On *uvkhen* as a divine name, see *Maḥazor Vitri*, 366–67; Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, *Peirushei Siddur ha-Tefillah*, 2:643; Zedekiah ben Abraham Anav, *Shibbolei ha-Leqet*, par. 286; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 148–49 (and Wolfson's notes); *Zohar* 3:219b (*RM*); *Tur, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 582.

229. **All is included in this holy Agent...** All of the letters of the three verses (Exodus 14:19–21) are interwoven into a divine name and included in *Shekhinah*, the holy Agent. She completes the Chariot and conveys divine action to the worlds below.

On *Shekhinah* as Agent, see above at notes 202–4. On Her role in the Chariot, see above, note 216.

230. **This is the Holy Name...** The name composed of all the letters in the three verses. As noted above, each verse is linked with one of the patriarchs and with one of their three *sefirot*: *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*.

"Forty-eight words" apparently refers to the first forty-eight triads, which constitute two-thirds of the total of seventy-two triads. The triad ו-ה-ו (*vav, he, vav*), which begins the entire name, reappears at the beginning of the final third of the name as the forty-ninth triad, following "forty-eight words." This may be understood as implying that the "perfection" and "essence" of the name is completed by the

initial “forty-eight words,” with the remaining twenty-four triads (the final third) constituting a kind of summary or extension of the name.

For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital; Galante; *Sullam*; Scholem; *MmD*. On the division of the seventy-two triads into three sets of twenty-four, see *Bahir* 79 (110).

231. **Trunk of the tree: א-נ-י...** The triad א-נ-י (*alef, nun, yod*) is the thirty-seventh triad of the name, beginning the second half of the total of seventy-two triads; so it constitutes the middle, or trunk, of the tree. The triad ו-ה-ו (*vav, he, vav*) is the very first triad, so it constitutes the head of all. It also begins the final third of the name (see the preceding note), serving as the head of these further branches.

On the “forty-eight words,” see the preceding note. The “three upper worlds” and “three lower worlds” may refer to two sefirotic triads—*Keter, Ḥokhmah, Binah*, and *Netsaḥ, Hod, Yesod*—in both of which the name is inscribed, in addition to its identification with the middle triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*. The threefold formula, *Holy, holy, holy* (from Isaiah 6:3), would then allude to all these three realms. Immediately, Rabbi Shim’on offers another interpretation of *Holy, holy, holy*—referring to the three central *sefirot*: *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*.

On the triads א-נ-י (*alef, nun, yod*) and ו-ה-ו (*vav, he, vav*), see M *Sukkah* 4:5; JT *Sukkah* 4:5, 54c; Rashi and *Tosafot* on BT *Sukkah* 45a, s.v. *ani va-ho*; Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, *Peirushei Siddur ha-Tefillah*, 1:132; Ḥizzequni on Exodus 14:21; *Zohar* 1:23a (*TZ*); 3:222b (*RM*), 227a (*RM*), 276b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 113b (*TZ*); Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 15:3. On the threefold formula from Isaiah, cf. *Bahir* 89 (128); Vital. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital; Galante; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

232. **When Israel encamped...** They saw not only Pharaoh’s soldiers but also hostile powers from above arrayed against them. See above, note 206. “The Holy

Ancient One" is the primordial *sefirah, Keter*, also known as רצון (*Ratson*), "Will, Favor."

233. ***Why are you crying out to Me?...*** The verse concludes: *Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward!*

This verse is discussed briefly and enigmatically in *Zohar* 2:178b, in the section of the *Zohar* known as *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (The Book of Concealment): *"YHVH said to Moses, 'Why are you crying out to Me?'—to Me*, precisely! *'Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward!'—and have them journey forward*, precisely! It depended on מזלא (*mazzala*), the flux of destiny...." In other words, at this critical moment Israel should not focus their prayer on *Tif'eret* (symbolized by *YHVH* and indicated in the verse by *Me*), but rather they should *journey forward*, directing their prayer to the highest sefirotic realm, the Holy Ancient One (*Keter*), known as *mazzala*.

See BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 28a: "Rava said, 'Life, children, and sustenance do not depend on merit but on *mazzala*, destiny.'" The word מזלא (*mazzala*) means "constellation, planet, planetary influence, zodiacal sign, destiny, fortune, guardian angel." In the *Zohar, mazzala* is associated with the root נזל (*nzl*), "to flow," and often refers to the flow of emanation from *Binah*. However, here in *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* (and in the *Idrot* of the *Zohar*), *mazzala* symbolizes the Holy Ancient One (*Keter*). See above at note 106; p. 17, n. 67.

Sifra di-Tsni'uta (The Book of Concealment) appears in *Zohar* 2:176b–179a. Composed in short, obscure sentences, it is an anonymous, highly condensed commentary on the beginning of the Torah. Its subject is the mysteries of divine being.

234. **sea executed supernal judgments...** *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the sea, punished the Egyptians along with the hostile powers from above.

According to rabbinic sources, it is as difficult for God to feed humanity and to find them appropriate sexual partners

as it was to split the Red Sea. In the *Zohar*, this theme is linked with the passage from BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 28a quoted in the preceding note: "Life, children, and sustenance do not depend on merit but on *mazzala*, destiny." In the *Zohar*, as noted above, *mazzala* can symbolize the Holy Ancient One (*Keter*). According to Rabbi Yitsḥak, all of humanity's basic needs (including nourishment and sexual partnership) are as difficult as splitting the Red Sea because all of these needs as well as the miracle at the sea depend upon the same ultimate level: the Holy Ancient One.

On the difficulty of feeding and matching humans, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:4; 97(98):3 (p. 1245); *Vayiqra Rabbah* 8:1; BT *Pesaḥim* 118a, *Sotah* 2a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 2:4. For the *Zohar*'s linking of this theme with *mazzala*, see 1:207b; 3:292b (*IZ*). Cf. 2:170b. On *Shekhinah* as sea, see above at note 174.

235. **one doe on earth...** *Shekhinah*, the Divine Presence filling the earth. She conveys human prayer and the needs of the world to the higher *sefirot* and yearns for the flow of emanation, through which She sustains all below.

On *Shekhinah* as doe, see *Zohar* 1:4a; 2:7b, 8b, 10a–b, 36b, 46a, 56b, 119b (*RM*), 219b; 3:21b, 25b, 68a, 249a–b. On the doe's crying out as benefiting other creatures, see *Midrash Tehillim* 22:14. The verse in Psalms concludes: *so my soul longs for You, O God*.

236. **When she needs to give birth...** The image derives from BT *Bava Batra* 16b, where Rabbah offers a paraphrase of God's words to Job out of the whirlwind, explaining His wondrous precision in nature: *"Do you observe the calving of does?* (Job 39:1). This doe has a narrow vagina. When she crouches to give birth, I prepare a serpent who bites the vagina and she is loosened of her offspring. If it comes one second too soon or one second too late, she immediately dies."

Here the doe symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who gives birth to human souls. The splitting of Her womb parallels the

splitting of the Red Sea (which also symbolizes *Shekhinah*). The demonic serpent plays a mysterious and vital role in the birth process, and Rabbi Shim'on insists that one should not probe the matter any further. In *Zohar* 3:249b, Rabbi Abba teaches that the demonic serpent bites the doe's vagina twice. After the first bite, the serpent licks her blood, deriving nourishment; after the second bite, water issues, sustaining heavenly creatures. The serpent's bite and the nourishment that he derives ensure a successful birth, which sustains life in the worlds below.

The phrase "do not test את יהוה (*et YHVH*)" derives from Deuteronomy 6:16. Here, perhaps, Rabbi Shim'on understands *et YHVH* as alluding to *Shekhinah* (known as *et*) and *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*). The link between their fertile union and the demonic serpent should not be probed. This warning not to explore further may also refer to messianic speculation.

On the doe giving birth, see *Midrash Shemu'el* 9:2; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 2; *Midrash Tehillim* 42:1; Rashi on Job 39:1; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Psalms 741; Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 8c–d; *Zohar* 2:119b (*RM*), 219b–220a; 3:67b–68a, 67b–68a (*RM*), 249a (*RM*), 249a–b; *OY*; Vital; Galante; *MmD*.

On the doe as a symbol of messianic redemption, see JT *Berakhot* 1:1, 2c; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 6:10; *Midrash Tehillim* 22:13; above, p. 25. On the messianic implications of this birth, see *Zohar* 3:67b–68a, 249a (both *RM*); Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 807; Berger, "Ayalta," 209–17; Meroz, "Ge'ullah be-Torat ha-Ari," 306–15; Liebes, "Terein Urzilin de-Ayyalta," 126–48, 166–69; idem, *Sod ha-Emunah ha-Shabbeta'it*, 177–78, 280, n. 69; Elqayam, "Leidato ha-Sheniyyah shel ha-Mashiaḥ," 114–22.

On the doe's narrow vagina, see BT *Eruvin* 54b, *Yoma* 29a, *Bekhorot* 7b. Cf. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 5:2; 6:29. On the theme of nourishing or assuaging the demonic

powers, see above, p. 140, n. 13. On the word *et* and its function as a name of *Shekhinah*, see below, note 586.

237. **appointed ruler of the Egyptians…** Their heavenly prince, named Egypt. Once he was deprived of his dominion and passed through the River of Fire, he was considered to have perished and his people below were defeated.

On the prince named Egypt, see above, note 177. On the heavenly princes, see above, note 80. On the River of Fire, see above, p. 21, n. 81. The River of Fire is located near *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the Great Sea.

238. ***Israel saw the great hand…*** The verse concludes: *that YHVH wielded against Egypt, and the people were in awe of YHVH, and they trusted in YHVH and in Moses His servant*.

239. **Here the hand was completed…** In Egypt, each of God's ten fingers delivered one of the ten plagues. Now, in the miraculous splitting of the Red Sea, the entire left hand of God appeared and was complemented and completed by His right hand. Appropriately, the left hand, symbolizing *Gevurah*, is included in the right hand, symbolizing *Ḥesed*.

Rabbi Ḥiyya apparently reads the phrase היד הגדולה (*ha-yad ha-gedolah*), *the great hand*, as alluding to both the left hand—known simply as *the hand*—and the right hand, symbolizing *Ḥesed*, which is also called גדולה (*Gedullah*), Greatness. On "hand" as the left hand, see above, note 121.

On God's finger delivering a plague, see Exodus 8:15, where the Egyptian soothsayers respond to the plague of lice by exclaiming: *It is the finger of God!* See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 6; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:31; below, note 259.

On all depending on the right, see *Zohar* 2:57a–b, 66a, 223a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254; Wolfson, "Left Contained in the Right." The verse in Exodus 15 begins: *Your right hand, O YHVH, glorious in power*.

240. **Sihon and Og** Kings of the Amorites and of the Bashan region, both in the Transjordan. According to Numbers 21, Sihon refused to let the Israelites pass through his territory on their way to Canaan, and Og confronted them hostilely; both kings were defeated by the Israelites.

On the hardening of Sihon's heart, see Deuteronomy 2:30.

241. **every day he witnessed…** Pharaoh saw plague after plague but still stubbornly refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt.

242. **Pharaoh was wiser than all his sorcerers…** Despite his expertise in sorcery and in various demonic powers ("crowns"), Pharaoh did not foresee God's deliverance of Israel, which stemmed from a higher source. Pharaoh and his sorcerers bound Israel with all kinds of magical forces, but he failed to realize that the sefirotic bond of Faith dominates all such powers.

On Pharaoh's expertise in sorcery, see *Zohar* 1:195a; 2:28a, 37b. On the Egyptians binding Israel through sorcery, see above, p. 178 at n. 141.

243. **this Name that hardened Pharaoh's heart…** According to rabbinic tradition, Pharaoh knew the names of many gods but not the name *YHVH*; so when Moses and Aaron conveyed *YHVH*'s message to the Egyptian ruler, he replied, *Who is YHVH that I should heed His voice to let Israel go? I do not know YHVH, nor will I let Israel go* (Exodus 5:2). In effect, the name *YHVH hardened Pharaoh's heart*.

See *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 5; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 2; *Shemot Rabbah* 5:14; *Zohar* 1:195a; Vol. 3, p. 194, n. 100. Exodus 5:1 reads: *Thus says YHVH, God of Israel: "Let My people go."*

244. **Later he said, *I have sinned*…** At first, Pharaoh defiantly refused God's command, saying *Who is YHVH that I should heed His voice to let Israel go? I do not know YHVH,*

nor will I let Israel go (Exodus 5:2). Later, that same mouth admitted, *I have sinned against YHVH*.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 5:14; 20:10; *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ, Petiḥta*. The last two sources contrast Pharaoh's defiant question (*Who is YHVH*?) with Exodus 9:27: *This time I have sinned! YHVH is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong*.

245. **אחת היא (*Aḥat hi*), *It is all one!...*** According to the simple sense of this verse, Job denies any moral order in the universe: God is indifferent to good or evil. Rabbi Ḥizkiyah transforms Job's subversive declaration into a statement about *Shekhinah*, who executes divine judgment upon both *innocent and wicked*, as explained below.

The pronoun היא (*hi*) means both *she* and *it*. Rabbi Ḥizkiyah matches the clause in Job—אחת היא (*aḥat hi*)—with the same clause in Song of Songs, which he also applies to *Shekhinah*, the daughter of *Binah, her mother*. See above, note 204. The verse in Song of Songs concludes: *pure she is to the one who bore her*.

246. **When the blessed Holy One arouses...** When He executes judgment by means of *Shekhinah*, the righteous are punished for the sins of the wicked.

The verse in Samuel reads: *The angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, and YHVH regretted the evil and said to the angel who was sowing destruction among the people*, "רב (*Rav*), *Enough! Now let your hand drop.*" According to a midrashic reading attributed to Rabbi El'azar (BT *Berakhot* 62b), the word *rav* here means not *enough* but *great one*: "The blessed Holy One said to the angel, 'Take for Me *a great one* among them, through whom many sins can be requited for them.'"

Rabbi Yose's comment ("Job spoke a word...") apparently means: Job stated correctly that both *innocent and wicked He destroys*, but he did not penetrate to the deeper meaning, namely, that the innocent are punished for the sins of the wicked.

See *Zohar* 2:214a. On this theme, see BT *Shabbat* 33b (Munich MS): “Rabbi Gorion (according to others, Rabbi Yosef son of Rabbi Shema’yah) said, ‘When there are righteous ones in the generation, the righteous are seized for the sin of the generation. When there are no righteous in the generation, schoolchildren are seized for the sin of the generation.’”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 2:6; *Kallah Rabbati* 6:4; Rashi on BT *Ta’anit* 11a, s.v. *ha-tsaddiq avad*; *Zohar* 1:67b–68a, 180a; 2:10b, 38b, 195a. Cf. *Mekhilta, Neziqin* 18; BT *Shabbat* 55a, *Avodah Zarah* 4a. On the death of the righteous as atonement, see Vol. 1, p. 381, n. 296.

247. **Assembly of Israel…** *Shekhinah*, for whose sake the blessed Holy One slew many Egyptians, including some who had not oppressed the Israelites.

On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18.

248. **Job was struck…** According to rabbinic tradition, Job was one of Pharaoh’s advisers. At the Red Sea, when Satan accused Israel of idolatry, God handed Job over to preoccupy Satan and stop the demonic accusations. Here, Rabbi Ḥiyya explains that Job complained about his mistreatment.

The verse in Exodus 9 describes the response of some of Pharaoh’s servants to the announcement of the plague of hail: *Whoever feared the word of YHVH among Pharaoh’s servants sheltered his slaves and his livestock indoors*. According to a midrashic reading based on verbal analogy, *whoever feared the word of YHVH among Pharaoh’s servants* refers to Job, who *feared God* (Job 1:1).

See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 9:20; JT *Sotah* 5:5, 20c; *Shemot Rabbah* 12:2; above, p. 139, n. 11; p. 141, n. 17; p. 148 at n. 40. Cf. *Zohar* 2:69a, where Job is said to have repented. The verse in Exodus 5 continues: *to let Israel go*.

On the expression "All characters are equal," see JT *Sanhedrin* 10:2, 28c; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:11; *Rut Rabbah* 5:6; *Midrash Tehillim* 4:5 (and Buber's note); *Zohar* 3:183b; *Arukh ha-Shalem* and *Tosefot ha-Arukh ha-Shalem*, 336, s.v. *appayya*.

249. **falling hailstones that were impeded…** According to a midrashic tradition, when Moses stopped the plague of hail in Egypt, hailstones remained suspended in the air; some of these eventually fell in the days of Joshua, striking the Amorites, and the rest are destined to fall at the end of days, striking the enemies of Israel.

See Exodus 9:33; Joshua 10:11; Ezekiel 38:22; BT *Berakhot* 54b; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 19; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 22; *Shemot Rabbah* 12:2, 7.

250. ***As in the days of your coming out…*** In this verse from Micah, the Exodus serves as a paradigm for Israel's future restoration and salvation. On this theme, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 8; *Tanḥuma, Eqev* 7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 17; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:11.

251. **The beginning of this verse does not match…** Why the switch from *Israel* to *the people*?

252. **That old man…** Jacob (whose name was changed to Israel) went down to Egypt with his children, beginning the many years of exile there. Now he rose from the grave and witnessed God's mighty deeds, as indicated by the verse: *Israel* [that is, Jacob] *saw the great hand*. The conclusion of the verse refers to *the people*.

See Rashi, BT *Ta'anit* 5b, s.v. *af hu baḥayyim*; *Bereshit Rabbah* 92:2; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Wistinetzki), 33; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, 14:287–88. Cf. above, p. 224 and n. 91. On the tradition that Jacob never died, see above, note 128.

253. **When Israel journeyed…** That is, when Jacob journeyed.

See *Zohar* 1:222a, 226a. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 76:1; 79:1. The context in Genesis (46:2–4) reads: *God spoke to Israel in visions of the night, and He said, "Jacob! Jacob!"*

And he said "Here I am." He said, "I am God, God of your father. Fear not to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there. I Myself will go down with you to Egypt and I Myself will surely bring you up as well, and Joseph will lay his hand on your eyes."

254. **From here...** Rabbi Yitsḥak offers a different verse to prove that Jacob witnessed the deliverance from Egypt. The idiomatic expression בפניו (*be-fanav*) means, literally, *with His face* and in this verse emphasizes that God delivered Israel in person, using no angel or other intermediary. Rabbi Yitsḥak applies the expression to Jacob, who brought his whole clan to Egypt and who is alluded to in the first half of the verse: *Because He loved your fathers, He chose their seed after them*.

255. **with the face of Abraham...** Rabbi Ḥizkiyah employs verbal analogy to demonstrate that *His face* alludes to Abraham.

The verse in Genesis records Abraham's reaction when he is told that Sarah will give birth to a son: *Abraham flung himself on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "To a hundred-year-old will a child be born? And will ninety-year-old Sarah give birth?"* In response to Abraham's doubt, God swore that the patriarch would witness his numerous descendants.

256. **All the patriarchs...** Rabbi Abba extends the meaning of *His face* to include all of the patriarchs.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 92:2; *Zohar* 3:25a.

257. ***With His power*—Isaac...** *Power* refers to Isaac's *sefirah, Gevurah* (Power). *Great* refers to Abraham's *sefirah, Ḥesed* —also known as *Gedullah* (Greatness).

258. **the patriarchs...** The three patriarchs symbolize the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. David, the ideal king, symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom) and is also symbolized by *the land*. Together, the patriarchs and David constitute the divine chariot-throne.

On the patriarchs as the Chariot, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 47:6: “Resh Lakish said, ‘The patriarchs themselves constitute the Chariot.’” See above, note 66. On David as the fourth component of the divine chariot, see Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 342; Vol. 3, p. 134, n. 311. On the patriarchs as ensuring or hastening deliverance, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 70:6; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 11a.

259. ***Israel saw the great hand…*** God had already struck Egypt with His fingers when delivering the ten plagues, so why does the verse say that now *Israel saw the great hand*? Rabbi Shim’on explains that previously each divine finger delivered one of the plagues; now, in the splitting of the sea, the entire left hand of God appeared and was complemented and completed by His right hand—which is identified with *Ḥesed*, also known as *Gedullah* (Greatness) and alluded to here by the word *great*.

See above, note 239. On God’s finger delivering a plague, see Exodus 8:15, where the Egyptian soothsayers respond to the plague of lice by exclaiming: *It is the finger of God!* On each finger amounting “to a large sum,” see *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 6 (and *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:31; Passover Haggadah), where each plague in Egypt is said to have amounted to 4 (or 5) plagues, totaling 40 (or 50) plagues; consequently at the sea, where God’s entire hand appeared, the Egyptians were struck by 200 (or 250) plagues.

“Those rungs were plucked from their links” means that the demonic powers aiding the Egyptians were torn from their links with the divine powers and thereby disabled. See above, p. 176, n. 133.

260. **Of the first five fingers…** The first five plagues in Egypt were delivered by the fingers of the divine right hand (*Ḥesed*), whose gentle quality enabled Pharaoh to still exercise his free will and decide on his own to harden his heart. Once this first round of plagues was completed, and Pharaoh did not repent, the last five plagues were delivered

by the fingers of the left hand (*Gevurah*), whose harsh quality robbed Pharaoh of his independent will and hardened his heart automatically.

On the various expressions for the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, see Exodus 7:13, 22; 8:11, 15, 28; 9:7, 12, 35; 10:20, 27; 11:10; 14:8. On the distinction between the earlier and later plagues, see *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 3; *Shemot Rabbah* 11:6 (and *Yefeh To'ar*, ad loc.); 13:3; Rashi and Naḥmanides on Exodus 7:3.

261. ***And they believed in YHVH…*** Why does this verse refer to the Israelites' belief in God now? Much earlier, when Aaron first informed the people of their impending liberation and performed signs for them, *the people believed*. Moreover, they had witnessed the ten plagues and their deliverance from slavery. Rather, the wording here (*and they believed in YHVH and in Moses His servant*) refers to what Moses told them immediately before the splitting of the sea: *Do not be afraid. Stand firm and see YHVH's deliverance that He will perform for you today, for as you see the Egyptians today, you will not see them again forever*. Now that they saw the Egyptians lying dead on shore of the sea, the Israelites believed what Moses had said.

Exodus 14:31 reads in full: *Israel saw the great hand that YHVH wielded against Egypt, and the people were in awe of YHVH, and they trusted* [or: *believed*] *in YHVH and in Moses His servant*.

The full verse in Exodus 4 reads: *The people believed and they heard that YHVH cared about the Children of Israel and that He had seen their affliction, and they knelt and bowed down*.

262. **Look at what is written…** Rabbi Yeisa is bothered by the fact that despite Moses' promise, technically the Israelites did see the Egyptians again. He is not satisfied by Rabbi Yose's explanation that the Egyptians were dead, because the verse does not read *You will not see*

them again alive, but rather *You will not see them again forever*.

Exodus 14:30 reads: *YHVH on that day delivered Israel from the hand of Egypt, and Israel saw Egypt dead on the shore of the sea*.

263. ***From world until world…*** מן העולם ועד העולם (*Min ha-olam ve-ad ha-olam*). In biblical Hebrew the word עולם (*olam*) means "eternity," and the simple sense of this phrase is *from eternity to eternity*; but here Rabbi Abba adopts the later sense of *olam*: "world." The two worlds are *Binah* and *Shekhinah*. *Binah*, the Divine Mother, kindles all the lamps (the lower *sefirot*, emanating from Her); *Shekhinah*, the final *sefirah*, is their consummation, and She conveys divine action below.

On the meaning *from world to* [or: *until*] *world*, see M *Berakhot* 9:5; *Tosefta Berakhot* 6:21; *Zohar* 1:34a, 153b, 158b, 210a, 247b, 248b; 2:22a, 144a; 3:145b, 285b, 297b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 342–43.

264. ***Then sang Moses…*** The verse continues: *this song to YHVH*.

265. ***Before I formed you…*** The verse spoken by God to Jeremiah. It concludes: *before you came out of the womb, I consecrated you; a prophet to the nations I appointed you*. Here the verse is applied to Moses, the faithful prophet, who issued from the tribe of Levi, God's share of Jacob's sons.

According to midrashic tradition, Jacob offered his son Levi as a tithe to God, devoted to serving Him. God sent the angel Gabriel to crown Levi with the gifts of priesthood, which were inherited by Levi's descendant Aaron. From Levi's descendants, God drew Moses and invested him with holiness.

On Levi as Jacob's tithe (and various ways of calculating Levi as the tenth), see Jubilees 32:3; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 355; *Sifrei Zuta* 18:6; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:24; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 32:25; *Bereshit Rabbah* 70:7 *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 10:6. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer*

37; *Tanḥuma, Koraḥ* 12; *Tanḥuma, Re’eh* 14; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beḥuqqotai*, 7; *Re’eh* 12.

On God’s gifts to Levi, see Rashi on Genesis 29:34 (citing *Devarim Rabbah*); Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Genesis 29:34, n. 110. Cf. *Zohar* 2:19a (*MhN*).

The expression “girding him with… sashes” derives from the description of the consecration of Aaron and his sons. See Leviticus 8:7, 13; *Targum Onqelos*.

266. **from the quarry of precious sapphire…** From *Shekhinah*, symbolized by a precious stone.

The 248 crowns correspond to the 248 limbs of the body, soon to house this soul. The significance of the number 173 is uncertain; perhaps it alludes to the ten *sefirot* (squared), divided into seven lower ones (here multiplied by ten) and three higher ones. The 5 crowns may allude to the five *sefirot* (*Ḥesed, Gevurah, Netsaḥ, Hod, Yesod*) clustered around Moses’ *sefirah, Tif’eret*.

For various interpretations of these numbers, see *OY*; Galante; *MmD*. On the 248 limbs (actually joints or bones covered with flesh and sinews), see M *Oholot* 1:8. On the hewing of Moses’ soul, see *Zohar* 2:21b (*MhN*). The phrase “entrusting him with all His house” plays on Numbers 12:7: *In all My house he* [Moses] *is trusted*.

267. **Open מ (*mem*)…** Moses’ Hebrew name, משה (*mosheh*), comprises three letters: מ (*mem*), ש (*shin*), ה (*he*)—each representing a divine potency. Here *mem* adorns and equips Moses’ soul, passing it through camps of angels.

Normally, the letter מ (*mem*) is written with a small opening at the bottom left; when it concludes a word, the letter is completely closed: ם (*mem*). Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, the open *mem* symbolizes *Shekhinah* or *Yesod*, while the closed *mem* symbolizes *Binah*. See BT *Shabbat* 104a; *Bahir* 57 (84); *Zohar* 2:127a, 135a, 180a; 3:66b, 237a, 285b.

“Facet of facets” renders סטרא דסטרין (*sitra de-sitrin*); the word *sitra* means “side, aspect.” Apparently, Moses is given this title because He includes all aspects of the divine

realm. See above, p. 52 and n. 228; *Zohar* 2:21b (*MhN*). For an alternative interpretation, see *OY*.

The verse in Psalms concludes *and You brought us out to abundance*. Here, *a human* alludes to Moses, who rules over the angels. *Fire and water* may symbolize *Din* (Judgment) and *Ḥesed* (Love), which Moses, through the potency of his prayers, is able to transform into one another.

268. **ש (*Shin*) of the patriarchs...** The three prongs of this second letter of Moses' name symbolize the three patriarchs and their three corresponding *sefirot*: *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. Moses is identified with *Tif'eret*, which harmonizes *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*; so he is adorned with all three of these sefirotic crowns.

See *Zohar* 1:2b, 224a; 2:204a. On the phrase "appointed him trustee of the house," see above, end of note 266.

269. **ה (*He*) ascended...** This final letter of Moses' name often serves grammatically as a feminine marker and in the *Zohar* symbolizes the feminine Divine Presence, *Shekhinah*. Here, *he* receives Moses' soul and prepares to deliver it to earth.

270. **Then that spirit descended...** Moses' soul descended via angelic ships sailing the sea of *Shekhinah*, and before being embodied, it was named.

On ships as angelic potencies, see *Zohar* 1:34b, 124a; 2:30a, 48b, 50b, 56a.

271. **he descended to earth...** Moses' embodied soul was born to Jochebed and Amram, both of the tribe of Levi. As he issued into the world, *Shekhinah*—symbolized by the letter ה (*he*)—illumined him and the entire house.

On the house being filled with light, see BT *Sotah* 12a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:20; above, p. 52 and n. 228. Galante identifies the number 425 with one of the seventy-two names of God: כהת (*kaf, he, tav*), whose *gimatriyya* (numerical

value) is equivalent. For this name, see the chart of triads above (p. 262), at the left end of the first row.

272. **cast down the appointed prince…** God vanquished the heavenly prince of Egypt, and Israel saw him *dead on the shore of the sea* (Exodus 14:30) and then sang in celebration.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 22:2; above, p. 267 and n. 237.

273. **all of them open with אז (*az*), *then*…** Solomon uttered his words when dedicating the Temple; Joshua, upon defeating the Amorites; Israel, in celebration of a well in the wilderness.

The verse in Joshua reads: *Then Joshua spoke…*

274. **All the miracles…** The two letters of the word אז (*az*), *then*, symbolize the full range of the *sefirot*. The highest level, the Holy Ancient One (or *Keter*), is symbolized by א (*alef*). When its radiance joins *Shekhinah*, symbolized by ז (*zayin*), God's wondrous power becomes manifest.

The letter ז (*zayin*) suggests the word זין (*zayin*), which means "weapon," alluding to *Shekhinah*'s role as *sword of YHVH*, executing Judgment. "On all sides" apparently refers to praise for the miracles performed for Israel as well as for the punishment brought upon her enemies.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *YHVH has a sword, full of blood, gorged with fat—with the blood of lambs and goats, with the kidney fat of rams. For YHVH has a slaughter in Bozrah, a great butchery in the land of Edom*. On *Shekhinah* as "sword," see *Zohar* 1:53b, 66a–b, 237a, 238b, 240b; 2:26a, 28b, 61a, 66a; 3:19b, 30b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 69, 213.

275. **ישיר (*Yashir*), *Will sing*…** The verse reads *Then* ישיר (*yashir*), *sang, Moses*. The imperfect form of the verb expresses action that continues over a period of time; but here, Rabbi Abba reads it hyperliterally—*will sing*—and he questions why the verse did not employ the perfect form, שר (*shar*), denoting the past tense. He explains that the form *yashir* is intentionally ambiguous ("suspended"), referring

both to the past (at the Red Sea) and to the final redemption, when Moses and Israel will sing this song once again.

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1; BT *Sanhedrin* 91b; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beshallaḥ* 13.

276. **even though the ancient righteous ascended…** Even though when the righteous die, they ascend to the bundle of divine life, they will eventually be resurrected in a physical body—as indicated by the wording here: *Then will sing Moses*…

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1; BT *Sanhedrin* 91b, which cite this verse as a proof-text for the doctrine of the resurrection.

The phrase "bundle of life" derives from 1 Samuel 25:29: *The soul of my lord will be bound in the bundle of life*. In the *Zohar*, this *bundle* can refer to the celestial Garden of Eden or to *Shekhinah*, source and destination of all souls.

See *Zohar* 1:65b, 224b; 2:11a, 36b, 59a; 3:24b–25a, 70b, 71b, 92a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 123; *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 61 (75–76); Scholem.

277. **From here…** Rabbi Shim'on quotes a different verse to prove bodily resurrection. The verb קנה (*qanah*) can mean "to acquire" or "to create." Here Rabbi Shim'on applies the meaning "create" to the verse in Isaiah: God will re-create the bodies of the righteous (*the remnant*).

The verse in Proverbs is spoken by Wisdom.

278. ***The remnant…* the righteous…** This identification is based on the word *remained* in the verse in Numbers, which pertains to the virtuous men Eldad and Medad, who were inspired and prophesied.

Rabbi Shim'on then quotes a statement in praise of those who are self-effacing: "The world endures only through those who make themselves שיריים (*shirayim*), remnants [or: leftovers]." This statement does not appear as such in extant rabbinic literature; rather, it combines the

motif of “one who makes himself like *shirayim*, remnants,” with the statement in BT *Ḥullin* 89a in the name of Rabbi Abbahu: “[The world endures only on account of] one who makes himself as if he did not exist.”

On “making oneself like *shirayim*,” see BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 17b, *Megillah* 15b, *Sanhedrin* 111b, where the phrase is applied to the remnant of Israel.

279. **Since they have been bound…** Since the righteous are enjoying the bliss of the afterlife, why would God bring them back down to earth in bodily form? Rabbi Shim’on explains that before earthly life too, souls dwelled in a heavenly realm, yet God brought them down here; all the more so, now, after they have lived and inevitably sinned, God wants them to return to earthly existence and mend what they have damaged or requite their misdeeds.

On the question of why souls originally descend, see *Zohar* 1:235a, 245b; Vol. 3, p. 425, nn. 601–2; pp. 502–3, nn. 899–900.

280. **due to the advice of the serpent…** Not on account of their own sins, but only because of the sin of Adam and Eve, who were enticed by the serpent.

Rabbi Shim’on replies that since such virtuous souls died only because of the serpent’s “advice,” they will be rewarded by becoming “advisers” of the Messiah.

See BT *Shabbat* 55b: “Four died through the incitement [or: advice] of the serpent, namely: Benjamin the son of Jacob, Amram the father of Moses, Jesse the father of David, and Chileab the son of David.” See *Zohar* 1:53a, 57b.

281. ***As in the days…*** In this verse from Micah, the Exodus serves as a paradigm for Israel’s future restoration and salvation. Rabbi Shim’on questions the switch from the second person (*your coming out*) to the third person (*will show him*). He explains that *him* refers to Moses, who saw the original redemption from Egypt and will be shown the future redemption as well.

See above, note 250; Baḥya ben Asher on Genesis 49:10.

282. ***This song*—song of *Matronita*...** Rabbi Shim'on understands the biblical phrase *this song* as *song of this*—"song of *Shekhinah*," who is known as *this*.

Shekhinah is known as *this* perhaps because She is the Divine Presence, constantly right here. See above, note 194. On *Matronita* as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 197.

The verse reads: *Then sang Moses and the Children of Israel this song to YHVH*.

283. **Every person who chants...** The Song at the Sea (Exodus 15), which forms part of the daily liturgy. Whoever chants it now with the proper intention—on behalf of *Shekhinah* to the blessed Holy One—proves worthy of singing it in the afterlife.

Rabbi Shim'on is expanding on the rabbinic saying: "Whoever utters song [to God in general] in this world merits to utter song in the world that is coming." See *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 7 (where the proof-text is *Then will Moses sing*); BT *Sanhedrin* 91b; *Zohar* 2:60a, 131b–132a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 65. Cf. above, note 275.

"What has passed" refers to the miracle at the Red Sea. The song also alludes to miracles in the time to come, including resurrection. See above, note 276; below, at notes 371–74. "Bonds of faith" refers to the unifications in the sefirotic realm, the core of kabbalistic faith.

284. **את (*Et*)—to include...** The verse reads: *Then sang Moses and the Children of Israel* את (*et*) *this song to YHVH*. Grammatically, the word את (*et*) is almost always an accusative particle with no ascertainable independent sense. Yet already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. Here, according to Rabbi Shim'on, *et* expands the meaning of this verse to include all the praises offered by earthly and heavenly creatures.

See BT *Pesaḥim* 22b, *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Zohar* 1:247a; 2:81b.

285. **השירה (*Ha-shirah*), *song*...** Why this feminine form and not the more normal, masculine form: שיר (*shir*)? To show, Rabbi Shim'on explains, that this is the song sung by *Shekhinah* (*Matronita*). Even though Moses attained the masculine rung of *Tif'eret*, he chanted this song from below to above—from the rung of *Shekhinah*, who was also conveying this song above to Her beloved.

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:5; *Shemot Rabbah* 23:11; *Zohar* 3:201a, 284b–285a; *ZḤ* 63a (*ShS*).

286. ***To YHVH*—for the King...** *Shekhinah* sang this song to King *Tif'eret*, known as *YHVH*.

287. **For all those oils...** For the rich emanation from above.

288. ***Arise, cry out*—Assembly of Israel...** *Shekhinah*, known as Assembly of Israel, cries out on behalf of Her people from the dark exile that She shares with them.

On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18. On night as symbolizing exile, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:1. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 91, n. 79.

289. ***In the night*... when She rules...** This is Her time of dominion.

290. **the verse should read בראש (*be-rosh*), *in the beginning of*...** This would be more normal syntax. However, Rabbi Ḥiyya reads the word hyperliterally: לראש (*le-rosh*), *to the head of*, alluding to *Yesod*, the divine phallus who is known as *head*. *Shekhinah* (*Matronita*) turns to Him, asking to be showered with blessings.

Similarly in Genesis, the phrase *the head of the bed* refers to *Yesod*, who is directly above *Shekhinah*, known as *bed. Tif'eret* is situated above *Yesod*: *above the head of the bed*. See *Zohar* 1:149b, 171b, 225b, 226b; Vol. 3, p. 358, nn. 301–2.

The verse in Genesis reads: *Israel bowed* על (*al*), *at* [literally, *above*], *the head of the bed*.

291. ***Head of the watches…*** *Yesod*, who directs the stream of emanation from *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* to *Shekhinah*.

292. **head of the crowns…** *Yesod*, the phallus, represents the consummation of the divine male body. He directs the energy of all the masculine *sefirot* ("crowns") to *Shekhinah* and is therefore "head of the crowns." Alternatively, from below to above, He is their "head"; from above to below, their consummation.

293. **אשמרות (*ashmurot*), *the watches*—spelled deficiently…** With only one ו (*vav*) rather than two: אשמורות. The deficient spelling alludes to *Shekhinah*, who lacks light of Her own. *Yesod*, situated above *Shekhinah*, is Her *head*, and He completes the body of the Holy King, known as *YHVH*—to whom *Shekhinah* prays and sings.

On deficient spellings as alluding to *Shekhinah*, see above, pp. 157–58, nn. 65–66; p. 196, n. 195.

294. ***To YHVH*—the river…** Rabbi Yeisa offers a different interpretation. The phrase *to YHVH* in the first half of the verse (*Then sang Moses and the Children of Israel this song to YHVH*) refers to the Divine Mother, *Binah*, who flows from *Ḥokhmah* (Eden) and fuels all of the *sefirot* (lamps) issuing from Her.

The second occurrence of the phrase *to YHVH*, later in the verse (*Let me sing to YHVH*), refers to *Tif'eret* and the *sefirot* around Him (the Holy King). If the first mention of *YHVH* referred to the Holy King (and not to *Binah*), then the second phrase would have been worded *to Him*, not (redundantly) *to YHVH*.

295. **לאמר (*lemor*), *saying*…** The verse reads: *Then sang Moses and the Children of Israel this song to YHVH, and they said*, לאמר (*lemor*), *saying* [literally, *to say*]. The apparently superfluous word *lemor* actually expands the meaning of the preceding clause, *they said*, to include future generations.

On the statement “whoever is worthy of this song…,” see above at note 283. The phrase “at that time” means “at the Red Sea.”

296. **the verse should read *Let us sing*…** Since the verse opens by referring to both Moses and the Children of Israel. However, the singular pronoun *me* indicates that they were singing on behalf of *Shekhinah* (*Matronita*).

See above, after note 287. The full verse reads: *Then sang Moses and the Children of Israel this song to YHVH, and they said, saying: “Let me sing to YHVH, for He surged, O surged—horse and its rider He hurled into the sea.”*

297. ***For He surged, O surged*—ascending…** The Holy King ascended to the highest sefirotic realms, to bring forth blessings and power.

The phrase גאה גאה (*ga’oh ga’ah*), rendered here *He surged, O surged*, stems from a root meaning “to rise, be exalted, be proud, triumph,” also used for the rising tide of the sea. The Song at the Sea thus opens with a vivid pun, expressing God’s overwhelming the Egyptians with the waters of the Red Sea. See Alter, *Five Books of Moses*, on the verse.

298. ***For He surged*—in this world…** The phrase “at that time” means “at the Red Sea.” See *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 12; cf. *Mekhilta, Shirta* 2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1.

299. **dominion below and dominion above…** Both the Egyptians below (symbolized by *horse*) and their heavenly prince above (symbolized by *its rider*) were delivered into the hands of *Shekhinah* (the Great Sea).

See above at notes 234, 237, 272. On the verse in Isaiah, see above, note 80.

300. **On the very night…** *YHVH* empowered the sea of *Shekhinah* through *Gevurah*, and She asked that all the Egyptian forces and the powers assisting them above be handed over to Her. The nonspecific wording—*the sea*—encompasses both the sea above (*Shekhinah*) and the Red Sea below.

On the various powers above assisting the Egyptians, see above, notes 81, 206. The full verse in Exodus 14 reads: *And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and YHVH drove the sea with a mighty east wind all night, and He turned the sea into dry ground, and the waters were split*.

301. ***Behind and before You formed me…*** The verse reads: *Behind and before* צרתני (*tsartani*), *You encompassed me; You laid Your hand upon me*. Midrashic sources understand *tsartani* as *You formed me*. See below, note 306.

302. **empowering him over all faces…** Over all beings. See Genesis 1:26.

On the creatures' subservience to Adam, see BT *Shabbat* 151b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 11; *Zohar* 1:13b, 38a, 71a, 191a; 2:125b; 3:107b; *ZḤ* 38c; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 309, 337–38.

On tending the Garden, see Genesis 2:15; *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:5; *Zohar* 1:199b; Vol. 3, p. 223.

The verse in Genesis 9 is actually addressed to Noah: *Fear and dread of you shall be upon every living thing of the earth and upon every bird of the skies, in everything with which the earth teems and in all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are given*.

303. **thirteen canopies…** According to rabbinic tradition, God arranged an elaborate wedding for Adam and Eve, including numerous bejeweled canopies. Afterward, He commanded Adam not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, but the human couple violated this commandment.

On the numerous canopies in the Garden of Eden, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 18:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:2; BT *Bava Batra* 75a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:4; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 8:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 12; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥayyei Sarah* 2; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 14. In nearly all of these sources the number thirteen is proposed in the name of Rabbi Ḥama son of Ḥanina. Here, "thirteen canopies" renders טרוצבלין (*terotsbelin*), a Zoharic neologism perhaps combining Castilian *trece*, "thirteen," and *pabellón*, "tent, canopy."

304. **Book of Enoch…** Concerning Enoch, Genesis 5:24 states: *He was no more, for God took him*. In postbiblical writings this verse is taken to mean that God

transported Enoch through the heavens, a journey recorded extensively in the Enoch literature. The *Zohar*'s Book of Enoch, though influenced by this literature, is not identical with any of its extant volumes. It comprises one of the many books housed in the real or imaginary Zoharic library.

On the *Zohar*'s Book of Enoch, see 1:13a, 37b, 72b; 2:100a, 105b, 180b, 192b, 217a; 3:10b, 236b, 240a, 248b, 253b, 307a; *ZḤ* 2c (*SO*). See Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:158, 163, nn. 60, 61; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 80–83; Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 25; and Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, 1:22d: "All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*... have been lost in the wanderings of exile.... Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar.*"

"Adam's place in the Garden" refers to his place before he sinned.

"He was dismissed" renders נפק בדימוס (*nefaq be-dimos*), literally, "he went out with a pardon." *Dimos* derives from Latin *dimis, dimissio*, "release, pardon." See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:1, recounting the first day of Adam's life hour by hour: "... in the ninth [hour] He commanded him [not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge]; in the tenth he transgressed His command; in the eleventh he was judged; in the twelfth יצא בדימוס (*yatsa be-dimos*), he went out with a pardon, from the presence of the blessed Holy One." See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:1. The author(s) of the *Zohar* apparently understood *dimos* in the sense of "judgment, verdict," by which Adam was expelled from the Garden. See *Zohar* 3:208a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 37 (44).

305. **with two faces...** דו פרצופין (*Du partsufin*), namely, as an androgynous being.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1: "Rabbi Yirmeyah son of El'azar said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him androgynous, as is said: *Male and female He created them* (Genesis 1:27).' Rabbi Shemu'el son of Naḥmani said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam,

He created him with two faces. Then He sawed him and gave him two backs, one on this side and one on that."

See Plato, *Symposium* 189d–191d; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1; BT *Berakhot* 61a, *Eruvin* 18a; *Tanḥuma, Tazri'a* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri'a* 2; *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5. *Zohar* 1:2b, 13b, 34b, 47a; 2:178b (*SdTs*); 3:5a, 10b, 44b; Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 217.

306. ***He took one of his sides…*** The context (Genesis 2:21–22) reads: *YHVH Elohim cast a deep slumber on the human, and he slept, and He took one* מצלעותיו (*mi-tsal'otav*), *of his ribs* [or: *sides*], *and closed the flesh in its place. YHVH Elohim built the rib* [or: *side*] *He had taken from the human into a woman and He brought her to the human*. According to the midrashic tradition quoted in the preceding note, God divided the original androgynous human into two halves: male and female. Here, Rabbi Yitsḥak locates them in the east and west respectively, corresponding to *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

On צלע (*tsela*) as side, see Exodus 26:20: ולצלע (*ul-tsela*), *and on the side of, the Tabernacle*. See Exodus 25:12; 2 Samuel 16:13; *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1; Rashi and Ibn Ezra on Genesis 2:21.

The verse in Psalms reads: *Behind and before* צרתני (*tsartani*)—probably meaning *You encompassed me*. However, rabbinic sources understand the root צור (*tsur*) as a by-form of יצר (*ytsr*), "to form." See the midrashic sources cited above; BT *Berakhot* 61a, *Eruvin* 18a, *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5.

307. **adorned that female…** God adorned Eve before presenting her to Adam.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 18:1: "*YHVH Elohim built* הצלע (*ha-tsela*), *the side* (Genesis 2:22).... It was taught in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: 'He adorned her like a bride and brought her to him.'"

Cf. BT *Berakhot* 61a: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Menasia expounded, 'Why is it written: *YHVH Elohim built the side*? This

teaches that the blessed Holy One braided Eve's hair and brought her to Adam.'"

See *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 8; *Zohar* 1:34b, 48b; 3:44b. On צלע (*tsela*) as *rib* or *side*, see the preceding note.

308. מצלעותיו **(*mi-tsal'otav*), *of his sides…*** See above, note 306.

According to Rabbi Ḥiyya, the clause *He took one* means that God took the *one* feminine half of the two halves of the androgynous human. His proof-text is the verse in Song of Songs, where *one* alludes to *Shekhinah*.

See above, p. 268 and n. 245; *Zohar* 3:44b. Cf. *Bahir* 116–17 (172); *Zohar* 1:34b.

309. **From the place whence other holy souls derive…** From *Shekhinah*, who unites with *Tif'eret* and engenders human souls.

On the divine couple as parents of the soul, see *Zohar* 1:245b; 2:12a, 94b; 3:7a.

310. **From here…** Rabbi Yehudah offers a proof-text in support of Rabbi Yitsḥak's answer. *Earth* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is also symbolized by the Temple.

On the connection between the creation of Adam and the Temple, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 12: "He created him from a pure, holy site. From where did He take him? From the site of the Temple." See JT *Nazir* 7:2, 56b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:8 (and Theodor's note); *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 2:7.

On *a living soul* as the soul of Adam, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 7:5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1; *Zohar* 1:34a; 2:12a; 3:39b, 43b, 70b.

311. ***YHVH Elohim* *sent him away…*** The verse concludes: *to till the ground from which he had been taken*.

312. **from male and female…** From the union of the divine couple, *Tif'eret* (*our image*) and *Shekhinah* (*our likeness*). (Note also the verse's opening plural: *Let us make*.) The origin of the first human was reflected in its androgynous nature. See above, note 305; and Genesis 1:27: *God*

created the human in His image; in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them.

The clause *the ground from which he was taken* might imply that Adam was created solely from *Shekhinah*, symbolized by *the ground*. However, Rabbi Abba explains that She was joined by Her male partner, the blessed Holy One.

On *in our image, according to our likeness* as referring respectively to the masculine and feminine aspects of God, see *Zohar* 1:13b; 3:35b.

313. ***My strength and power is Yah…*** *My strength* alludes to *Binah*; *power* to *Ḥokhmah* (or possibly vice versa). This primordial divine couple is also known as יה (*Yah*), the י (*yod*) symbolizing the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, the ה (*he*)—often a feminine marker—symbolizing the Divine Mother, *Binah*. Their union is eternal and inseparable, unlike that of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, which depends in part on human virtue. *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* engender the streaming flow of the lower *sefirot*, which produces salvation.

"Holy King" refers to *Tif'eret* together with the *sefirot* around Him (*Ḥesed* through *Ḥesod*). "The right" refers to the powerful divine right hand, often symbolizing *Ḥesed*.

On the perpetual union of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, see *Zohar* 2:11b, 50b, 56a; 3:4a, 11a, 61b, 77b, 102a, 120a.

314. ***This is my God…*** *Yesod*, known as Righteous One, is called זה (*zeh*), *this*. By coupling with *Shekhinah*, He generates blessings.

In the verse in Exodus, the word ואנוהו (*ve-anvehu*) is often translated *and I will glorify Him*. Here, Rabbi Yose adopts another meaning: *and I will enshrine Him*, i.e., "I will build Him a temple," based on the noun נוה (*naveh*), "habitation." See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:2; *Targum Onqelos*; Ibn Ezra (short) on the verse. Cf. Exodus 15:13.

On *Yesod* as *zeh*, see above, p. 173 and n. 123. On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, p. 78 and n. 30.

315. **Moses said this…** Moses, who was a Levite, said, "*God of my father*," referring to *Gevurah*, divine source of the Levites. Moses sweetened the harsh Judgment of this *sefirah* by raising (or exalting) it to *Ḥokhmah* or *Binah*, thereby consummating all. Alternatively, Moses attained the rung of *Tif'eret*, thereby balancing *Gevurah* and *Ḥesed*. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; Scholem; *MmD*.

316. ***He has become my salvation*—Holy King…** Rabbi Yitsḥak indicates that this clause alludes to the Holy King (*Tif'eret*), based on the nearly identical verse in Isaiah, which specifies *YHVH*, the divine name associated with *Tif'eret*.

317. **blessed Holy One… *Your friend*…** For this interpretation of Proverbs 27:10, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 6:1; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 5; *Shemot Rabbah* 27:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 8:3.

318. ***For the sake of my brothers*… Israel…** See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:15; JT *Berakhot* 9:1, 13b; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:3; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 5.

The verse in Psalms, addressed to Jerusalem, concludes: *I say, "Peace be within you."*

319. **Is He *born* now?…** Of course, God is not *born* now. Rather, when adversity *is born*, God manifests Himself as *a brother*.

320. ***Is born*—for the Holy King arouses…** *Tif'eret*, the Holy King, derives from the Divine Mother (*Binah*), draws nourishment from Her, and defeats Israel's enemies.

On the sefirotic associations of *My strength and power is Yah*, see above, note 313.

321. **how can we establish these verses…** The two verses in Proverbs seem to contradict one another. However, they can be reconciled by adopting an interpretation found in BT *Ḥagigah* 7a, dealing with a similar contradiction: "Rabbi Levi raised a contradiction. It is written: *Rarely set foot in your friend's house*, and it is written: *I will enter Your house with ascent offerings*

(Psalms 66:13). There is no contradiction: the former refers to offense offerings and guilt offerings; the latter, to ascent offerings and communion offerings." In other words, one should minimize the need to bring offense offerings and guilt offerings, whereas it is fine to bring other kinds of offerings.

The phrase בית רעך (*beit re'ekha*) in Proverbs 25—rendered here *your friend's house*—is normally translated *your neighbor's house*.

322. ***Rarely set foot…*** **Cool your impulse…** Rabbi Yeisa understands רגלך (*rag-lekha*)—literally, *your foot*—as referring to the evil impulse, perhaps because it is רגיל (*ragil*), "frequent," in a person, or because it serves as a מרגל (*meraggel*), "spy," scouting out possible sins. Cf. Rashi on Numbers 15:39, paraphrasing *Tanḥuma, Shelaḥ* 15.

Rabbi Yeisa also apparently understands הוקר (*hoqar*), *rarely set*, as "cool," based on קר (*qar*), "cold, cool."

For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MmD*.

323. ***your friend's house…*** **holy soul…** The soul is a dwelling for your divine *friend*, which He has placed within you.

324. **For all of Israel saw…** Their vision of God surpassed even that of Ezekiel, who saw the divine chariot-throne whirling through the heavens.

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1, 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1, 2; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:2; *Tosefta Sotah* 6:4; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 15:2; JT *Sotah* 5:4, 20c; BT *Berakhot* 50a, *Sotah* 11b, 30b–31a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:9; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), pp. 14–15; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:12; 23:8; *Midrash Tehillim* 8:5; 68:14; *Zohar* 2:60a, 64b, 94a.

325. ***God of my father…*** All of Israel exalted Ḥesed, God of Abraham their father, namely, the divine potency associated with Abraham. Rabbi Yose wonders why it should be necessary to exalt this *sefirah*, who is already so elevated. Rabbi Yeisa replies that even *Ḥesed* can be further

elevated, joined with the highest sefirotic realm in consummate oneness.

The unification of the name יהוה (*YHVH*) symbolizes the unity of all the *sefirot*. The י (*yod*) represents the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, while its upper stroke symbolizes *Keter*. The first ה (*he*), often a feminine marker, symbolizes the Divine Mother, *Binah*. The ו (*vav*), whose numerical value is six, symbolizes *Tif'eret* and the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (Ḥesed through *Yesod*). The second ה (*he*) symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

On "God of Abraham" as signifying *Ḥesed*, see *Zohar* 1:150a. According to *OY*, "God of Abraham" alludes not to *Ḥesed*, but to *Ḥokhmah*, "God of [i.e., the one who transcends] Abraham [i.e., *Ḥesed*]." See Galante. On *God of my father*, cf. above, p. 287 and n. 315.

326. ***The voice of your watchmen!...*** The full verse reads: *The voice of your watchmen! They raised their voices, together they will shout for joy; with their own eyes they will see when YHVH returns to Zion*.

327. **the verse should read *They will raise...*** Because the prophet Isaiah foresees redemption. However, the past tense (*They raised their voices*) indicates that whoever has wept for the destruction of the Temple will eventually rejoice over its rebuilding.

See BT *Ta'anit* 30b: "Whoever mourns for Jerusalem attains seeing her joy." See the end of verse in the preceding note.

328. **בשוב יהוה עיון (*Be-shuv YHVH tsiyyon*)...** The simple sense of this clause is *when YHVH returns to Zion*, but Rabbi Yehudah wonders why the preposition אל (*el*), *to*, is missing.

329. **He replied...** Rabbi Shim'on explains that here the verb שוב (*shuv*) is actually transitive. As Jerusalem was destroyed, *Shekhinah* (Assembly of Israel) Herself was driven away from the Temple, and *Tif'eret* (the Holy King) withdrew *Yesod* (known as Zion) toward Himself, since the union between *Yesod* and *Shekhinah* was interrupted. In the time of redemption, when *Shekhinah* reappears, *Tif'eret* raises Her and

returns Zion (*Yesod*) to His place, reuniting the divine couple. Then Israel will declare, *This* [namely, *Yesod*] *is my God, and I will enshrine Him* [in the Temple]. Israel's redemption implies divine redemption, as indicated by the quotation from Isaiah 25, which mentions *His salvation*—God's own salvation.

See *Zohar* 3:74b–75a. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 91, n. 79. On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18. On the verse in Exodus 15 (and the significance of *this*), see above, p. 287 and n. 314.

On God's own salvation, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14; *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Beshallaḥ*) 2; *Sifrei*, Numbers 84; JT *Sukkah* 4:3, 54c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 9:3; BT *Megillah* 29a; *Midrash Shemu'el* 4:4; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Aḥarei Mot* 18, *Bemidbar* 10; *Shemot Rabbah* 30:25; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:14; 13:4; 80:3; 91:8; below, at note 368; *Zohar* 3:90b; *Minḥat Shai* on Isaiah 43:14.

330. ***Therefore is it said…*** The verse concludes: *'Waheb in a whirlwind and the wadis* [or: *streams*] *of Arnon.'*

The *Book of the Wars of YHVH* is apparently a poetic account of God's wars against the enemies of Israel in the time of Moses and Joshua. It is mentioned only here in the Bible.

331. **For you cannot find a word in Torah…** Every word alludes to the divine name and nature, and is filled with multiple meanings.

On the countless meanings of the words of Torah, see *Zohar* 1:54a, 135a, 145b, 163a, 187a, 201a; 2:12a, 59b, 65b, 98b–99b; 3:79b, 149a, 152a, 174b, 202a, 265a; *ZḤ* 6d (*MhN*). Cf. *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 336; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:47; BT *Menaḥot* 29b; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:50.

On the link between Torah and the divine name, see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 548; Naḥmanides, introduction to Commentary on the Torah, 6–

7; *Zohar* 2:60a, 87a, 90b, 124a; 3:13b, 19a, 21a, 35b–36a, 73a, 89b, 98b, 159a, 265b, 298b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 341–42; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 37–44; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1085–86; Idel, "Tefisat ha-Torah."

332. **where is *the Book of the Wars of* YHVH?...** The Bible contains no other reference to such a book. See above, note 330. Rabbi Abba explains that the phrase *the Book of the Wars of* YHVH alludes to the battles fought by Torah scholars, disputing with one another over the meaning of God's *Book*. Such conflict leads ultimately to peace and harmony.

On *the Book of the Wars of* YHVH as "the war of Torah," see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 321; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 25; JT *Ta'anit* 4:6, 69b; *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:4.

On the midrashic reading of את והב בסופה (*et vahev be-sufah*), see BT *Qiddushin* 30b, in the name of Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Abba: "Even father and son, master and disciple, who are engaged in Torah at the same gate become each other's enemies. Yet, they do not stir from there until they come to love one another, as is said: את והב בסופה (*et vahev be-sufah*), *Waheb in a whirlwind*—do not read בסופה (*be-sufah*), *in a whirlwind*, but rather בסופה (*be-sofah*), at its end."

See Rashi, ad loc.; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Numbers 21:20; *Zohar* 3:42a (*RM*), 278b (*RM*). On the battle of Torah, see also *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 34; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:25; BT *Shabbat* 63a, *Megillah* 15b, *Ḥagigah* 14a, *Sanhedrin* 42a, 93b, 111b; *Rut Rabbah* 4:3; *Tanḥuma, Noaḥ* 3, *Vezot Haberakhah* 5; *Midrash Tehillim* 45:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Zuta* on 3:8; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:3; 13:10; *Zohar* 1:17b, 226a, 240b; 2:110a–b; 3:59b, 127b (*IR*), 188a–189b; *ZḤ* 14a (*MhN*).

333. **the verse should read *in the Torah of the Wars of* YHVH...** Since the phrase refers to the Torah. However, Rabbi Abba explains that here *book* alludes to *Shekhinah*, in whom all things and events (both past and future) are inscribed. From Her, all divine powers issue.

On *Shekhinah* as *book*, see *Zohar* 2:70a, 126b, 200a.

334. **Who is *Waheb*?...** This too refers to *Shekhinah*, the final sefirotic rung, who wages the divine wars.

The saying from Proverbs is apparently a retort to someone who constantly begs favors, or perhaps a warning that a greedy parent engenders greedy children. Here, הב הב (*hav, hav*), *'Give!' 'Give!'* may refer to the fact that *Shekhinah* seeks sustenance from the *sefirot* above Her. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

Rabbi Abba plays on בסופה (*be-sufah*), *in a whirlwind*, and בסוף (*be-sof*), "at the end of," referring to *Shekhinah*'s position as the final rung of the sefirotic ladder. She is also known as *Yam Suf*, "Sea of Reeds" (or "Red Sea"), playing on *suf*, "reed," and *sof*, "end." See above, note 175.

335. **ואת הנחלים ארנון (*Ve-et ha-neḥalim arnon*), *And the streams of Arnon*...** Rabbi Abba interprets the word את (*et*) according to one of its meanings: "with." *Shekhinah* fights the divine battles "with" the power of the streams of emanation issuing from *Arnon*—the perpetual embrace of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*. In these sefirotic streams, divine roots are sunk, yielding mighty branches empowering *Shekhinah*.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*. The *river* is the flow of emanation issuing from *Ḥokhmah* (*Eden*) to water *Shekhinah* (*the garden*).

On the perpetual union of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, see above, note 313. For various interpretations of *Arnon*, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*. The verse in Numbers reads: *Waheb in a whirlwind and the streams* [or: *wadis*] *of Arnon*.

336. **dazzling guardians...** גרדינין טהירין (*Gardinin tehirin*). *Gardinin* derives from the Castilian *guardián* (guardian). See Corominas, *Diccionario*, 3:246–48.

Tehirin apparently derives from טיהרא (*tihra*), "brightness, noon." One class of demons is named טהרי (*tihrei*), "noonday demons." See Psalms 91:6 and Rashi, ad loc.; *Targum*, Song

of Songs 4:6; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Numbers 6:24, Deuteronomy 32:24; Vol. 3, p. 216, n. 227.

For this compound term, see *Zohar* 1:203b; 3:62b, 213b, 266a, 286b.

337. **The sea, agitated…** The sea of *Shekhinah* is agitated. Her ships (relatively benevolent powers) disappear when harsh forces dominate.

Apparently, Rabbi Abba interprets *YHVH is a man of war* as "*Tif'eret* is husband of *Shekhinah*, who wages war."

On the agitated sea of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 235 and n. 132; p. 249 and n. 186. On the divine weapons, see above, p. 254 and n. 204.

338. **from those letters and from this verse…** Apparently referring to the first sixteen letters of Exodus 15:3: יהוה איש מלחמה יהוה (*YHVH is a man of war, YHVH*). These are construed as a complex divine name, since they are immediately followed by שמו (*shemo*), (*is*) *His name*. The letters are arranged in lines of battle, apparently in four lines of four letters each, arrayed against the enemies of God and Israel.

See Rabbi Abba's statement above (at note 331): "For you cannot find a word in Torah that does not allude to the supernal Holy Name."

See *OY*, who presents a more complex name. Cf. the seventy-two divine names emerging from three verses in the preceding chapter (Exodus 14:19–21), as explained above, notes 216, 223–26.

339. ***And YHVH rained…*** The expression *And YHVH* implies *Tif'eret* (*YHVH*) as well as *Shekhinah* (indicated by *and*).

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 51:2 (on the verse in Genesis 19), in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Wherever it is said *And YHVH*, this implies: He and His court." In Kabbalah this court symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who derives from *Din* (Judgment) and pronounces the divine decree, so the phrase *And YHVH* encompasses "He [the divine male, known as *YHVH*] and His court [*Shekhinah*]." See above, note 65.

While the opening of the verse in Genesis 19 (*And YHVH*) includes *Shekhinah*, the end of the verse (*from YHVH out of heaven*) emphasizes the role of *Tif'eret*, who is known as both *YHVH* and *heaven*. Similarly, in the verse in Exodus 15, *YHVH is a man of war* includes *Shekhinah*, who fights the divine battles, but the verse concludes by emphasizing the role of *Tif'eret* Himself: *YHVH is His name*. The two divine aspects cooperate fully, as indicated by the verse in Job, where *heaven* symbolizes *Tif'eret*, and *earth* symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

For a somewhat different interpretation, see *OY*.

340. **those above and below are plucked…** The heavenly princes of Israel's enemies, along with the earthly enemies themselves, are severed from their links above and defeated. See above, note 259.

Apparently, Rabbi Abba emphasizes that in the time to come, *Tif'eret* will wage war Himself, not by means of *Shekhinah*.

The verse in Zechariah concludes: *as when He battles on a day of war*. The verse in Ezekiel concludes: *in the eyes of many nations, and they will know that I am YHVH*.

341. ***his teams-of-three…*** שלישיו (*Shalishav*). The technical term שליש (*shalish*) apparently derives from שלש (*shalosh*), "three," and may mean "third man in the chariot" or "team-of-three," or else simply "officer, captain."

342. **upper rungs and rungs below rouse…** Apparently, higher angels (under the direct command of *Shekhinah*) battle the heavenly princes of Israel's enemies, while lower angels battle the enemies themselves. *Pharaoh's chariots* are an example of earthly enemies; *his force*, an example of the heavenly princes. See above, p. 283 and n. 299.

343. **As Israel was about to cross…** The angel appointed over the sea contends that the Egyptians should also be allowed to pass through safely, but God reminds him that ever since Creation, the sea was destined to divide for Israel alone.

See above, p. 239 and n. 148. Cf. above, p. 139, n. 11. On the angelic defense of Egypt, see *Midrash Avkir*, 44, 46; *Midrash Va-Yosha* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:40) (all quoted in *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Exodus 241, 243; *Midrash Va-Yosha* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:47); *Zohar* 2:170b.

"A truly measured split" renders פוסקא דקינטא קשוט (*pusaqa de-qinta qeshot*). *Pusaqa* means "a cut." *Qinta* may derive from קינטרא (*qintera*), based on Latin *centenarius*, a weight. See *Zohar* 3:39a. Alternatively, *qinta* may reflect קונטא (*qunta*), based on Greek *konta*, "a multiple of ten," in which case the phrase here could be rendered "a multiple split truly." For various interpretations, see Galante; *DE*; *MM*; *NO*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

344. **Slay these troops...** God directs the prince of the sea to slay the Egyptians, then cast them out on the shore (so that Israel will see their corpses), and then swallow them up again. The verset *The depths covered them* refers to this second drowning.

See Exodus 14:30; *Midrash Va-Yosha* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:46).

345. **how many chariots...** Numerous angelic powers. On the left side arouse other, demonic powers, alluded to by the phrase *Pharaoh's chariots and his force*.

346. **firstborn of Pharaoh...** Symbolizing the high demonic power who oversees a host of forces. Some of these were linked to the "supernal site" of *Shekhinah*, some "behind four millstones," namely, outside the four camps of angels attending *Shekhinah*. All of these demonic powers were now delivered into the hands of *Shekhinah*, also known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom) and symbolized by the Great Sea. Once they were vanquished above, the Egyptians below were defeated. The nonspecific wording—*the sea*—encompasses both the sea above (*Shekhinah*) and the Red Sea below.

See above, notes 299–300, 342. On the firstborn of Pharaoh, see above, p. 176 at n. 135.

The image of the “millstones” derives from Exodus 11:5, describing the victims of the last of the ten plagues (the killing of the firstborn): *Every firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones, and every firstborn of the beasts*. In the *Zohar, behind the millstones* refers to the demonic realm. See 1:48a, 118a, 177a, 223b; 2:28a, 37b, 80a, 191b.

“Princes” renders קוזמטין (*qozmetin*), similar to rabbinic loanwords deriving from Greek *kosmion* or *kosmarion*, “adornment.” Cf. the basic forms *kosmeo*, “to order, arrange, rule, adorn,” and *kosmos*, “order, ornament, ruler, universe.” In the *Zohar, qozmetin* and its variants can mean “ornaments” or “rulers.” See above, pp. 176–77, n. 135.

347. ***his teams-of-three…*** Rabbi Yehudah indicates that Pharaoh’s chariots were arranged triadically so that they would correspond to the triadic structure of the *sefirot*, in which *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* are mediated by *Tif’eret*; *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, by *Yesod*. See above, notes 78, 341.

348. **All those ten plagues… all was one hand…** In Egypt, each of God’s ten fingers delivered one of the ten plagues; yet this actually represented one divine hand, since all ten fingers interlaced, constituting a single hand. The ten fingers correspond to the ten *sefirot* (known also as ten utterances), by which God is revealed and named.

On ten fingers and ten plagues, see above, note 239. On the ten utterances, see M *Avot* 5:1, “The world was created through ten utterances.” See above, p. 152, n. 52.

349. **this at the sea—mighty, immense…** The miraculous splitting of the Red Sea was equivalent to (or greater than) all the plagues in Egypt. See above, note 259.

The verse in Isaiah 63 describes God’s vengeance against Israel’s enemy, Edom, who in rabbinic literature often symbolizes the Roman Empire, and in medieval Jewish literature, Christianity. Bozrah was the ancient capital of Edom. The verse concludes: *striding in the greatness of His*

strength? The verse in Isaiah 8 continues: *by way of the sea*.

"Quaestors and commanders" renders the neologistic phrase קוזדורוטן וקלטרוסולין (*qozdorotin ve-qaltrosolin*). The first may derive from קוסדור (*qusdor*), based on Latin *quaestor*, "official, prosecutor, judge." The second perhaps from קלטור (*qalator*), based on Latin *calator*, "officer."

350. ***When He thunders…*** The verse concludes: *He raises mist from the end of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain and brings forth wind from His treasuries*.

351. **seven heavens…** On the number of heavens, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12b–13a: "Rabbi Yehudah said, 'There are two רקיעים (*reqi'im*), firmaments [or: heavens]….' Resh Lakish said, 'Seven, namely, וילון (*Vilon*), Curtain; רקיע (*Raqi'a*), Expanse; שחקים (*Sheḥaqim*), Heaven; זבול (*Zevul*), Loft; מעון (*Ma'on*), Dwelling; מכון (*Makhon*), Site [or: Foundation]; ערבות (*Aravot*), Clouds.'…

"Rabbi Aḥa son of Ya'akov said, 'There is one more heaven above the heads of the living beings, as is written: *An image above the heads of the living being: a heaven* [or: *firmament, expanse*] *like awesome ice* (Ezekiel 1:22).'…

"Rabbi Yoḥanan son of Zakkai said, '…From the earth to heaven is a distance of five hundred years [i.e., it takes five hundred years to traverse it], and the thickness of heaven is a distance of five hundred years, and similarly between each and every heaven. Above them [i.e., the heavens] are the holy living beings. The feet of the living beings are equivalent to all of them [i.e., to all of the heavens]; the ankles of the living beings are equivalent to all of them; the legs of the living beings are equivalent to all of them; the knees of the living beings are equivalent to all of them; the thighs of the living beings are equivalent to all of them; the torsos of the living beings are equivalent to all of them; the necks of the living beings are equivalent to all of them; the heads of the living beings are equivalent to all of them; the horns of the living beings are equivalent to all of them.

Above them is the Throne of Glory; the feet of the Throne of Glory are equivalent to all of them; the Throne of Glory is equivalent to all of them. The King—Living and Eternal God, High and Exalted—dwells above them.'"

"Living beings" renders חיות (*ḥayyot*), "animals, living beings, creatures," from Ezekiel's vision of the divine throne transported through heaven by these angelic beings.

"The measure of the blessed Holy One" refers to קומה שעור (*shi'ur qomah*), "measure of [the divine] stature," which is gauged in immense numbers in early Jewish mystical literature. See *Zohar* 1:36a, 132b; 2:175b–176a; above, p. 150, n. 44.

Various elements here do not appear in the passage in *Ḥagigah* but rather in the description in *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 44 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:43), for example, the reference to the buttocks of the living beings and several formulations in the concluding paragraph.

Scholem suggests that "200 years" may be a mistake for "500 years." See JT *Berakhot* 1:1, 2c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 6:6; *Midrash Tehillim* 4:3; *Zohar* 1:85b; 2:165a, 213a.

352. **One more heaven...** See the passage from BT *Ḥagigah*, quoted in the preceding note.

The verse in Ezekiel reads: *An image above the heads of the living being* [singular]*: a heaven* [or: *firmament, expanse*] *like awesome ice, spread out above their heads*.

353. **Below the sea...** Beneath the surface of the sea of *Shekhinah* swim angelic beings, *small and great*.

"Four descending" may refer to four camps of angels. See *MM*. For other readings and interpretations of the phrase rendered here "gathering in their splendor, four descending their rungs," see *OY*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 1:236a, 247a–b; 2:12a, 30b, 48b–49a.

354. **From the lower left...** Various demonic powers, deriving from higher powers, were vanquished at the Red

Sea.

See above, notes 342, 346. “Prince” renders קוזמיטא (*qozmita*); see above, end of note 346.

355. **doe stands firm…** *Shekhinah*, united with Her partner, King *Tif’eret*, conceives. The “two hundred palaces” apparently symbolize the two masculine potencies, *Tif’eret* and *Yesod*.

On *Shekhinah* as doe, see above, note 235.

356. **engages in Torah at midnight…** At midnight, *Shekhinah* is aroused by *Gevurah* (symbolized by north) to unite with *Tif’eret* and to convey the flow of emanation to the world. One who rises at that hour to engage in Torah adorns and accompanies Her, and the next morning he is rewarded with a thread-thin ray of divine love.

See BT *Berakhot* 3b: “Rabbi Shim’on the Ḥasid said, ‘There was a harp suspended above [King] David’s bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn.’”

In the *Zohar* this legendary custom is expanded into a ritual. At midnight, God delights in the souls of the righteous in the Garden of Eden, and those who study Torah here below partake of the celestial joy. See Psalms 119:62; above, pp. 167–68, n. 99.

On the thread of love, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12b: “Resh Lakish said, ‘To one who engages in Torah by night, the blessed Holy One extends a thread of love by day, as is said: *By day YHVH directs His love*. Why? Because *in the night His song is with me*.’” *His song* is the song of Torah. See above, note 61.

357. **He gazes at the sky…** He is bathed in radiant wisdom, welcomed as a son of the divine couple—*Tif’eret* (the blessed Holy One) and *Shekhinah* (the palace)—and his prayers enter God’s presence easily. Such a person knows how to call God *in truth*—that is, by focusing on *Tif’eret*, who is known as *truth*, and stimulating His union with *Shekhinah*.

The verse from Micah links *truth* with *Jacob*, who symbolizes *Tif'eret*. Unifying the Name *YHVH* signifies the unification of all of the *sefirot*, including *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

On the unification of the Name, see above, note 325. On gazing at the sky, cf. *Zohar* 2:130b.

358. **If any priest...** When the priest offers a sacrifice (lower service), he must intend thereby to unite the *sefirot* (higher service). If he succeeds, a flow of blessing enriches the *sefirot* and the worlds below.

On the intention of the priest, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 116; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 521; *Zohar* 3:8b, 146b; *ZḤ* 82a (*MhN, Rut*); Baḥya ben Asher, *Kad ha-Qemaḥ*, 292; Lieberman, *Tosefet Rishonim*, 2:207; Scholem.

359. **The verse should read לְרָאוֹת (*lir'ot*), *to see*...** The ultimate goal of worship is to attain a vision of God. Why, then, does the verse employ the passive form לֵרָאוֹת (*le-ra'ot*), *to be seen* [or: *to appear*]? Rabbi Shim'on reads the verse hyperliterally: לֵרָאוֹת פני (*le-ra'ot panai*), *that My faces* [plural] *will be seen*—that the *sefirot* (the various faces of God) will become visible to one who unifies the Name and penetrates the demonic darkness blocking the divine illumination.

360. ***Who asked this of you?...*** Rabbi Shim'on focuses on the word זאת (*zot*), *this*, which designates *Shekhinah*, the Divine Presence who is constantly right here. One who seeks to unify the Name must begin by focusing on *Shekhinah*, stimulating Her to unite above. Then *Yesod* (known as Righteous One) and *Shekhinah* (known as Righteousness) join as one. This sefirotic pair is also called *Your courts*, the opening of the divine realm.

On *Shekhinah* as *zot*, see above, note 194; p. 170, n. 108. On the verse in Leviticus, see above, note 204.

On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, p. 78 and n. 30. *Shekhinah* is known as צדק (*tsedeq*), Righteousness (or Justice), because She administers divine Justice. On Righteous One and Righteousness, see *Zohar* 1:34a, 49a, 182b, 246a; 2:147b, 169b; 3:26a, 68a, 69a, 105a, 115b, 165a, 236b,

287a, 297a. On *Yesod* and *Shekhinah* as *Your courts*, see *Zohar* 1:94b.

361. ***to trample My courts*, surely...** One who prays without genuine intention and devotion ruins the potential union of *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, trampling them, as it were. Not only does he deny them the flow of blessings; he provokes harsh Judgment, which dominates them and then spreads to the worlds below.

362. **From the right hand...** From *Ḥesed*, the divine right hand, radiant blessing flows to the world. From this *sefirah* derives *Gevurah*, the left hand, and ideally the two function harmoniously. Similarly, in a (typical) human being the right hand is dominant and the left subservient to it.

On the dominance of the right, see above at note 239 and the end of that note. Cf. *Mekhilta, Shirta* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:6; Rashi on Exodus 15:6.

363. **When a person raises his hand...** In raising his ten fingers, a person should focus on the ten *sefirot*; yet his right hand is primary because it symbolizes *Ḥesed*, the divine right hand, which assuages the harshness of *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment), on the left.

The full verse in Exodus, describing the battle against Amalek, reads: *When Moses would raise his hand, Israel prevailed; when he would let down his hand, Amalek prevailed*.

In the verse in Leviticus, the word יָדָו (*yadav*), *his hands*, is spelled without a second י (*yod*) and can therefore be read as יָדוֹ (*yado*), *his hand*, implying the primacy of the right hand. A priest who blesses the people, or a person raising his hands in prayer, should follow this principle.

On the symbolism of the ten fingers, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:3; *Midrash Tadshe* 10 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:174); *Bahir* 87 (124), 94 (138); Naḥmanides on Exodus 17:12; 30:19; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29b–c; idem, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 1:20b–21a; 2:67a, 75b–77a, 208a; 3:143a (*IR*), 145a (*Piq*), 186a–b, 195b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-*

Rimmon, 254. On raising the right hand higher than the left, see Todros Abulafia, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 2:67a, 225a; 3:92b, 145a (*Piq*), 146a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254.

On the verse in Exodus, see *Bahir* 92 (135), 94 (138); Naḥmanides on Exodus 17:11; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29b–c; *Zohar* 2:66a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 57 (and Wolfson's n. 5), 254–55. The verse in Leviticus reads: *Aaron raised his hands toward the people and blessed them*. On the peculiar spelling of יָדָו (*yadav*), *his hands*, see Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29b–c; idem, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 2:67a; 3:92b, 146a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254; *Minḥat Shai* on the verse.

364. **blessed Holy One, not so...** When God raises His right hand (*Ḥesed*), its blessings are withdrawn, and *Din* (Judgment)—His left hand—dominates.

Rabbi Shim'on quotes *Targum Onqelos* on the verse in Exodus. See *Zohar* 2:59b.

365. **When the right hand is present...** In the world below, then right and left function harmoniously, and Judgment is tempered.

366. **is it possible that *He has withdrawn His right hand*?...** God's right hand did not actively withdraw; rather, the power of harsh Judgment—His left hand—appeared in the world, destroying the Temple, while His loving right hand remained aloof.

For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MmD*.

367. ***The righteous one* אבד (*avad*), *loses*...** The simple meaning of the clause in Isaiah is *The righteous one* אבד (*avad*), *perishes*, but Rabbi Shim'on understands it to mean that *Yesod* (known as Righteous One) *avad*, *loses*, the flow of emanation from above, and also loses contact with *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel).

See *Zohar* 1:55b, 182a, 196b; 2:9b, 11a; 3:16b, 69a, 150b, 266b. On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, p. 78 and n. 30. On the divine faces, see above, note 359. On

Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18.

368. ***righteous* ונושע (*ve-nosha*), *and having salvation…*** The verse in Zechariah foretells the coming of King Messiah, and the simple sense of *ve-nosha* is *victorious*. Here, Rabbi Shim'on understands the verse to mean that King *Yesod* (known as *righteous*) will regain His spouse, *Shekhinah* (identified as *daughter of Zion* and *daughter of Jerusalem*). Insisting on the passive sense of *nosha*, Rabbi Shim'on teaches that *Yesod* Himself will be *saved*.

See *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Aḥarei Mot* 18; *Shemot Rabbah* 30:24; *Zohar* 3:69a; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 73. On God's own salvation, see above, note 329.

369. **נאדרי (*ne'dari*), *glorious…*** Rabbi Shim'on questions the unusual spelling of this word, with the final י (*yod*). He explains that this extra letter turns the word into a plural form—נאדרֵי (*ne'darei*)—alluding to both divine hands, which join together to smash the enemy.

See above, p. 301 and n. 362; MM; Galante; Scholem. On the doubling of *Your right hand* in this verse, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:6; Rashi on Exodus 15:6. For another reading and other interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MmD*.

370. **a human being is actually divided…** Male and female are each one half of an original androgynous whole. See above, notes 305–6. Similarly, the right and left hands are symmetrical and divided from one another.

God's *right hand*, receiving and including the left, was capable of redeeming Israel and vanquishing the Egyptians.

See Rashi on Exodus 15:6. Cf. *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:24; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:5; *Leqaḥ Tov* and *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 14:24; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 82.

371. **This song refers to that time…** The Song at the Sea refers both to that miraculous event and to the future

Messianic redemption, as indicated by the imperfect tense תרעץ (*tir'ats*), which Rabbi Shim'on understands hyperliterally as *will smash*. The eventual smashing of the enemy corresponds to—in effect, reverses—the previous devastating withdrawal of God's hand.

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:6; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 15. Cf. above, note 275. On the verse in Lamentations, see above at note 366.

372. **תהרוס (*Taharos*), *You will shatter...*** See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 6; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:7.

The full verse reads: *In Your abundant grandeur, You shatter those who rise against You; You send forth Your fury, it consumes them like straw*.

373. **Gog and Magog** Demonic powers who will wage eschatological war against the righteous and be defeated by God. The concept derives from Ezekiel 38:2.

374. **revival of the dead...** The verse in Daniel concludes: *these to everlasting life, those to shame and everlasting contempt*. To the latter, Rabbi Shim'on applies the verse in Exodus: *Your fury...will consume them like straw*.

375. **except for the circumcised...** Those who have been fully circumcised, in "two parts." In ritual circumcision, first the foreskin is cut and removed, disclosing the mucous membrane, which is then torn down the center and pulled back, revealing the corona. The act of tearing and pulling back the membrane is called פריעה (*peri'ah*), "uncovering" the corona. See M *Shabbat* 19:6: "If one circumcises but does not uncover the circumcision, it is as if he has not circumcised."

The "two parts" (removing the foreskin and uncovering the corona) correspond to *Shekhinah* and *Yesod*, who are symbolized respectively by *Jerusalem* and *Zion*. One who is circumcised completely enters these two divine realms. However, simply being circumcised (even completely) is not sufficient; one must guard the covenant of circumcision by

maintaining sexual purity, that is, by not uniting with a forbidden partner.

By insisting on both stages of circumcision, the *Zohar* effectively excludes both Christians and Muslims from "those who will remain in the world," since Christianity does not require circumcision and Islam requires only the removal of the foreskin. See *Haggahot Maharḥu*.

On the two stages of circumcision, see *Zohar* 1:13a, 32a (*Tos*), 32a–b, 93b, 96b, 98b (*ST*), 238b; 2:3b, 40a, 60b, 125b; 3:91b, 95b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 133; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 54–55 (67).

On Muslim circumcision, see Judah Halevi, *Kuzari*, 3:8; *Zohar* 2:32a (printed editions), 86a–87a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 54 (67); Kiener, "The Image of Islam in the *Zohar*," 54–60; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 366, n. 142. Cf. above, p. 78, n. 30.

On the question of sexual morality, see above, pp. 9–10, nn. 35, 38–39. The verse in Isaiah concludes: *in Jerusalem*. The verse from Psalms is quoted in an eschatological context in *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:2; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Aḥarei Mot* 3; *Midrash Tehillim* 75:2; *Zohar* 1:119a, 182a; 2:259a (*Heikh*); 3:16a.

376. **Rabbi Shim'on son of Rabbi Yose...** See the setting in *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:20: "Rabbi El'azar son of Rabbi Shim'on was going to Rabbi Shim'on son of Rabbi Yose son of Lekonya, his father-in-law...."

See JT *Ma'aserot* 3:8, 50d; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:11; *Devarim Rabbah* 7:11; *Seder ha-Dorot*, s.v. Shim'on ben Yose ben Lekonya. Cf. BT *Bava Metsi'a* 85a. Often, the *Zohar* switches the name Shim'on son of Yose into Yose son of Shim'on. See 1:5a (Vol. 1, p. 30, n. 205), 61b, 143b; 3:84b, 188a, 193a; *ZḤ* 10d (*MhN*), 14a (*MhN*), 22c (*MhN*).

377. **As he raised...** As Rabbi El'azar raised his head.

378. **For words of Torah...** This ellipsis appears as a gap of several lines in various manuscripts, including the earliest and most reliable ones (C9, P2, V7). Any lost or

censored material would have included an interpretation of the remarkable verse from Isaiah, which foresees Israel as one of the world powers, and describes Egypt and Assyria respectively as God's *people* and *handiwork*.

The Toronto MS (T1) contains such an interpretation here, but its reading betrays signs of later authorship—a scribal attempt to fill in the gap. Another such attempt appears as a parenthetical alternate reading in later printed editions (unattested in the manuscripts I have checked or in the Mantua or Cremona editions).

One Vatican MS (V8) concludes the final, truncated sentence: "For words of Torah are all written true." *OY* reads similarly: "… are precious." Cremona and Mantua read: "… are a path to attain that *beauty of YHVH*." These two printed editions then elide Rabbi Ḥiyya's question and continue with Rabbi El'azar's interpretation of the verse from Proverbs. *Derekh Emet* (emendations published by Joseph Ḥamiẓ and Moses Zacuto) reads: "… how many concealed supernal secrets are contained within them!"

Galante suggests that Rabbi El'azar may not have intended to interpret the verse, but rather quoted it humorously, alluding to the fact that Rabbi Ḥiyya has now joined him and his father-in-law as *the third*!

379. **If so, look at what is written…** Rabbi Ḥiyya seeks to know the deeper meaning of this verse from Proverbs, which concludes: *and all her paths are peace*.

380. ***no'am, the beauty of, YHVH…*** נעם (*No'am*) can mean "delightfulness" or "beauty." In Kabbalah it designates *Binah*, upon whom the righteous will gaze in the afterlife. *Binah*, the Divine Mother, gives birth to *Tif'eret*, symbolized by Torah. The ways of Torah derive from, and lead back to, the realm of *no'am*.

On *Binah* as *beauty of YHVH*, see *Zohar* 1:197b, 218a, 219a; 2:127a, 170b. Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 8:4. The full verse in Psalms reads: *One thing I ask of YHVH, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in*

the house of YHVH all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of YHVH and to contemplate in His temple.

381. **a light of that *beauty* radiated…** A ray of *Binah* illumined *Tif'eret* (known as the blessed Holy One).

In Kabbalah the verse from Song of Songs alludes to the wedding of King *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Solomon) with *Shekhinah*, in which *Binah* (*his mother*) participates and rejoices.

See M *Ta'anit* 4:8: "On *the day of his wedding*—this is the giving of the Torah [when God was wedded to the people of Israel]. *On the day of his heart's delight*—this is the building of the Temple, may it be rebuilt speedily in our days. Amen."

See *Sifra, Shemini, millu'im*, 15, 44c; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 33; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; Naḥmanides on Genesis 24:1; *Zohar* 1:29b, 218a, 246a, 248b; 2:22a, 84a, 100b; 3:61b.

382. **When Moses our teacher entered the cloud…** To receive the Torah at Mount Sinai, thereby arousing the envy of the angels.

Moses forces the angel Kemuel to withdraw by pronouncing a divine name of twelve letters, which had been transmitted to him at the Burning Bush. A name of twelve letters is mentioned but not identified in BT *Qiddushin* 71a. Later it was associated with the three occurrences of *YHVH* in the priestly blessing (Numbers 6:24–26). See *Bahir* 80 (111): "… numbering three, numbering twelve." See *Zohar* 1:16a, 19b; 2:201b; 3:78a–b, 172b; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 92, 290, n. 32. For various interpretations of the name here, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *MmD*.

This passage about Moses and the angels is based on earlier sources such as *Ma'yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:58–61); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20. See BT *Shabbat* 88b; *Zohar* 1:5a; 2:156b; 3:78b. On Kemuel and the other angels

mentioned below, see Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 51–52, 148–54, 175.

The verse in Exodus continues: *and went up the mountain*. The Greek parasang equals about 3.5 modern miles.

383. **who spoke at length with Me…** According to rabbinic tradition, God spent an entire week with Moses at the Burning Bush, trying to persuade him to accept his mission. Here, Rabbi El'azar indicates that Moses and God spoke for three days, apparently based on a midrashic reading of Exodus 4:10: *Moses said to YHVH, "Please, my Lord, no man of words am I, not from yesterday, not from the day before, not since You have spoken to Your servant, for I am heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue."* The day that Moses spoke these words plus *yesterday* and *the day before* amount to three days.

On a total of seven days, see *Seder Olam Rabbah* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 3:8; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:8; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:14; and parallels. According to *Leqaḥ Tov* and *Sekhel Tov* on Exodus 4:10, the total was four days. The *Zohar*'s reading—תלת (*telat*), "three"—may earlier have been ג (*gimel*), whose numerical value is three, and this letter could be a corruption of the nearly identical ז (*zayin*), whose numerical value is seven.

On Moses' request at the Burning Bush to know God's name, see Exodus 3:13–15.

384. **seventy-two letters of the supernal Name…** On the seventy-two-letter name and the seventy-two names, see above, note 216.

385. **Sandalfon transcends his fellows…** See BT *Ḥagigah* 13b: "Sandalfon… is higher than his fellows by a distance of five hundred years, and he stands behind the Chariot, binding crowns for his Creator."

See *Shemot Rabbah* 21:4: "Rabbi Pinḥas said in the name of Rabbi Me'ir, and Rabbi Yirmeyah said in the name

of Rabbi Abba, 'When Israel prays, you do not find them all praying as one, but rather each assembly prays on its own, one after the other. When they have all finished, the angel appointed over prayers gathers all the prayers offered in all the synagogues and fashions them into crowns, which he places on the head of the blessed Holy One.'"

See *Ma'yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:59); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Midrash Tehillim* 88:2; *Tosafot, Ḥagigah* 13b, s.v. *ve-qosher*; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 495; *Zohar* 1:37b, 132a, 162a, 167b, 168b–169a; 2:146b, 202b, 209a, 245b–246a (*Heikh*); Recanati on Genesis 19:27, 26a; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 148–54; Green, *Keter*, 37–38. The line "Blessed is the glory…" comes from the Targum to Ezekiel 3:12.

386. **He covered Moses with the light…** Of *Binah*, known as *beauty of YHVH*.

See above, note 380. On God covering Moses with light, see BT *Shabbat* 88b; *Ma'yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:60); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 13; *Shemot Rabbah* 42:4. Cf. *Zohar* 1:5a. On the radiance of Moses' face, see Exodus 34:29–35.

387. **As soon as they sinned…** When Israel worshiped the Golden Calf.

On the angels seeking to harm Moses as a result of this sin, see *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:3; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:11; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 20; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 13; *Pesiqta Robbati* 10; *Shemot Rabbah* 41:7; 42:4; *Midrash Tehillim* 7:6. On the angels nearly burning Moses, see BT *Shabbat* 88b; *Ma'yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:60); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Zohar* 1:5a; 2:156b.

On Moses' pleading with God not to destroy the people, see Exodus 32:11–14, 30–35. Exodus 32:7–8 reads: *YHVH said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people that you brought up from the land of Egypt has acted corruptly. They have swerved quickly from the way that I commanded them. They have made themselves a molten calf and bowed*

down to it and sacrificed to it and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!'"

388. **grasp My throne…** For protection and strength. The verse in Proverbs is interpreted to mean that Moses scaled the heavenly abode of the mighty angels and brought down the treasure of Torah. The remnant of divine radiance in Moses' face was too much for the Israelites to bear; how much more so with the full radiance originally bestowed upon him.

On Moses grasping the throne, see BT *Shabbat* 88b; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 13; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Shemot Rabbah* 42:4.

On the verse in Proverbs, see *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 34:9; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 31:5; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:4; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:11; and parallels. On the radiance of Moses' face and the Israelites' reaction to it, see Exodus 34:29–35 (which actually describes Moses' second descent from Mount Sinai).

389. ***Your right hand…*** **Torah…** Torah is associated with God's right hand, based on Deuteronomy 33:2: *From His right hand, a fiery law for them*.

See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 6; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:22; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 4:1; BT *Berakhot* 6a; *Zohar* 1:219b; 2:27a.

On Torah as strength (based on the verse in Psalms), see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:2; 19:16; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 343; BT *Zevaḥim* 116a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4; 2:3; *Midrash Tehillim* 8:4; 21:2; *Zohar* 1:240a; 2:94a; 3:269a.

390. **Because of this, Israel is exiled…** Because they neglect the study and observance of Torah.

See JT *Ḥagigah* 1:7, 76c; BT *Nedarim* 81a; *Zohar* 1:185a; *ZḤ* 8d (*MhN*).

391. **voice of Israel…** The verse in Genesis reads: *The voice is the voice of Jacob, and the hands are hands of Esau*.

According to a midrashic reading, as long as *the voice of Jacob* (the people of Israel) is engaged in prayer and the study of Torah, *the hands of Esau* (Israel's enemies) are powerless against him, but if *the voice of Jacob* falls silent or complains against God, then *the hands of Esau* dominate him.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:20; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 15:5; *Zohar* 1:151a, 171a.

392. **returning is denied to them…** When sins dominate to such an extent, the opportunity for תשובה (*teshuvah*)—"turning back" to God, repentance—disappears.

The word גאון (*ga'on*) can mean "height, eminence, grandeur, triumph, pride." Here, Rabbi Ḥizkiyah understands the phrase וברוב גאונך (*uv-rov ge'onekha*) as *in Your abundant eminence*—by rising high above, God abandons sinners to destruction. See above, note 297.

On the divine abandonment, see *Derekh Erets Rabbah* 2:31; *Zohar* 3:75a.

393. **the nations who will gather against Him…** In the time to come, the nations of the world will battle against God and be defeated.

"Quaestor" renders קסטורין (*qastorin*), deriving from Latin *quaestor*, "official, prosecutor, judge." Here, the term designates the heavenly princes of the seventy nations of the world. See above at note 349; JT *Eruvin* 6:2, 23b; *Zohar* 1:19b, 53b, 64b, 177a, 195a; 2:208b; 3:13a, 107a; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 188.

On the line "Let us rise against the Patron [i.e., God] first…," see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:11; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:11; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 18. Cf. above, p. 221 and n. 80. The verse in Psalms begins: *Kings of the earth station themselves*.

394. ***This will be the plague…*** The verse continues: *Their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet*.

395. **kings who besieged Israel…** Sennacherib, king of Assyria and Babylon, besieged Jerusalem in 701 B.C.E. but

failed to capture the city. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, besieged Jerusalem in 588 B.C.E. and destroyed the First Temple in 586.

רופינוס (*Rufinus*) derives from the Latin *rufus*, "red-haired." The name Rufinus is shared by various early Christian saints, a fourth-century Roman minister, and Tineus Rufus, the second-century governor of Palestine ordered by Emperor Hadrian to crush the Jewish rebellion. See above, pp. 168–69, n. 101.

Here *Rufinus* may refer to Hadrian, or to Vespasian or Titus. (Titus Flavius) Vespasian (later, emperor of Rome) began crushing the revolt in Judea in 66 C.E.; his son (Flavius Vespasianus) Titus destroyed the Second Temple in 70. Titus (or Vespasian) is called אספינוס (*Aspinus*) in *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, add. 2, 83a.

Instead of *Rufinus*, the Mantua edition reads here לופינוס (*Lufinus*), a name that designates Hadrian in Heikhalot literature. See Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, § 120, where it is said that *Lufinus* will be revived, judged, and punished.

The verse in Exodus reads: *In Your abundant grandeur*, תהרס (*taharos*), *You shatter, those who rise against You*. The verb *taharos* is in the imperfect form, which Rabbi Abba construes here as the future tense: *You will shatter*. See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 6; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:7; above at note 372.

On the future implications of the Song at the Sea, see above at notes 275–76, 371–74.

396. **in that time...** At the Red Sea. Thus this song refers both to that miracle and to the future redemption.

On Gog and Magog, see above, note 373. The verse in Exodus concludes: *streams stood up like a mound, abysses congealed in the heart of the sea*.

397. ***The enemy said...*** According to Rabbi Abba, the singular construction of the sentence refers to the heavenly

prince of Egypt. Cf. *Mekhilta, Shirta* 7; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:9; above, note 177.

"The mountains of the world" refers to the patriarchs, whose merit protects Israel. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 353; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:6; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 11a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:6; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 28; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:4; *Zohar* 1:87a, 208b.

The verse concludes: *my gullet will fill with them, I'll bare my sword, my hand will despoil them*.

398. **do not say, 'He alone'...** Not just the heavenly prince of Egypt sought to annihilate Israel, but all seventy princes (or *gods*).

Exodus 15:11 concludes: *Awesome in praise, working wonders*?

399. **One grand tree...** The tree of the *sefirot*, which nourishes heavenly and earthly beings via its "twelve boundaries" or potencies (corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel). The "four sides of the world" may correspond to the sefirotic quartet of *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Shekhinah*.

"Boundaries" renders תחומין (*teḥumin*), "boundaries, limits, dominions." The phrase here recalls the twelve גבולי אלכסון (*gevulei alakhson*), "diagonal borders"—edges of a cube—mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1.

See *Bahir* 64 (95); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 511–12; *Zohar* 1:76b (*ST*), 199a; 2:62b, 64b, 66b, 229b; 3:78a, 148b.

The imagery of the tree derives in part from Daniel 4:7–9, 12. For various interpretations, see *OY*; *MmD*.

400. **Seventy branches...** Corresponding to the seventy heavenly princes of the nations of the world, all of whom are nourished by the tree. Each heavenly prince and his earthly nation seek to destroy Israel entirely, but they are dominated by the trunk of the sefirotic tree—*Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel), to whom the people of Israel is linked.

On the seventy heavenly princes, see above, p. 19, n. 71; *Bahir* 67 (98). On Israel's link with the trunk of the tree, see *Bahir* 67 (98); *Zohar* 2:50a. Cf. 1:193a–b.

401. **When dominion reaches them…** When the heavenly princes and their earthly nations are empowered, the divine trunk does not destroy them, but rather protects them. Therefore, on the festival of *Sukkot*, Israel is commanded to offer seventy bulls, benefiting the seventy princes and nations.

On the seventy bulls and nations, see *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:23; BT *Sukkah* 55b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 28:9; *Zohar* 1:64a–b, 208b; 2:186b–187a; 3:24a–b, 54b–55a (Tos), 96b–97a, 104b, 259a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 177–78; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1251–53.

402. **What is *ba-elim*? A tree…** Rabbi Abba associates אלים (*elim*), *gods*, with אילים (*eilim*), *terebinths*, mentioned by Isaiah as a site of idolatry. Now the verse in Exodus implies: *Who is like You among* [those surrounding] *the terebinth(s)?*—that is, among the heavenly princes surrounding the cosmic tree. None of them compares to God, who protects all of them and their earthly nations ("all the rest").

"Case" renders כופסא (*kufsa*), perhaps playing on קופסא (*qufsa*), "box," derived from Greek *kapsa*. Here, it refers to some idolatrous image carved in the tree. See Isaac ibn Sahula, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 476, discussing the place-name אילם (*Elim*) in Exodus 15:27: "It has been taught in the names of the masters of the Mishnah: אלים (*Elim*) is a tree, as is said: *For you will be ashamed* מאלים (*me-elim*), *of the terebinths, that you desired*. It is a tree in which they used to carve an idolatrous image, and as the tree grew, the idolatrous image would grow along with it, and it was called *elim*. So this *elim* is an actual tree."

See *Zohar* 2:62b; *ZḤ* 30d (*MhN*); *DE*; Scholem, *Peraqim le-Toledot Sifrut ha-Qabbalah*, 64–65. On *kufsa* and

qufsa, cf. *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *kuspa*; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 186, s.v. *qufsa*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David* , 80, s.v. *qaspeta*.

On the phrase "to finish them off," see *Targum Onqelos*, Genesis 18:21; *Zohar* 3:199a.

403. **supernal power called *holiness*...** Near the top of the sefirotic realm.

Holiness usually refers to *Ḥokhmah*. "Power of *YHVH*" may refer specifically to *Ḥokhmah* or more generally to the stream of emanation issuing from *Keter*. See *Zohar* 3:161b, 295b (*IZ*). Beauty of *YHVH* refers to *Binah*. See above, note 380. For various interpretations, see *OY*; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

404. ***Who is like You...*** There is no clear connection between this verse and Rabbi Yose's teaching. One older manuscript (P2) places this verse at the end of the preceding paragraph. See *MmD*.

405. ***all is* הבל (*hevel*), *vanity*...** The word הבל (*hevel*) means "breath, vapor, and (especially in Ecclesiastes) "futility, vanity; that which is meaningless, empty and fleeting."

406. ***under the sun*... above the sun** Rabbi Yose explains that when Solomon said *All is vanity* he was referring only to material possessions and mundane pursuits, which are *under the sun*, not to spiritual matters and righteous activities, which pertain to the realm "above the sun."

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 28:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 8:1; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:3; *Zohar* 1:91b, 223b; 2:115b.

407. **If you say...** According to the *Zohar*, the word הבל (*hevel*)—literally, "breath"—can be positive, referring to each of the cosmic breaths animating existence, identified respectively with one of the seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*. However, in this verse in Ecclesiastes the tone seems negative: *All is hevel and striving after wind*. Furthermore, Solomon specifies *under the sun*, referring to the mundane realm (as explained in the preceding note).

On divine breaths, see above, p. 44, n. 191; pp. 185–86, n. 164; *Zohar* 1:146b (*ST*); 3:47b, 291b (*IZ*).

408. **turns into a *breath* above…** An angelic potency, which testifies above concerning the person's virtuous behavior.

See M *Avot* 4:11: "Rabbi Eli'ezer son of Ya'akov says, One who performs a single *mitsvah* acquires one defender; one who commits a single transgression acquires one accuser.'"

See *Zohar* 1:92a; 3:85a. Cf. 2:100b.

409. **turns into a *breath* that goes drifting…** A demonic potency, which whirls his departing soul through the world. So, in this verse הבל (*hevel*) does mean *breath*, but in a negative sense, matching the concluding phrase: רוח רעות (*re'ut ruaḥ*). Rabbi Yose interprets this phrase not as *striving after wind*, but as *shattering of spirit*, based on the root רעע (*r''*), "to smash, shatter."

See BT *Shabbat* 152a: "Rabbi Eli'ezer said, '… The souls of the wicked are continually muzzled, while one angel stands at one end of the world and another stands at the other end, and they sling their souls [the souls of the wicked] to each other, as is said: *The soul of your enemies He will sling from the hollow of a sling.*'"

See Radak on the verse in Samuel; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 351–53 (and n. 171, where Scholem cites de León's likely source in Jacob ha-Kohen's *Sefer ha-Orah*); idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 373 (and n. 6), 399; *Zohar* 1:77b, 128a, 217b; 2:99b, 103a, 142b; 3:25a, 185b–186a, 213b; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 345–48 (who discusses the Zoharic neologism קוספתא [*quspeta*], "hollow of a sling"). In a later book (*Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 67–68) de León rejects this particular stage of the afterlife.

410. **service of his Lord…** Such an act transcends the mundane world and constitutes a seed sown in the world that is coming, ensuring him a place in the realm of divine bliss.

The phrase “bundle of life” derives from 1 Samuel 25:29 (part of the same verse quoted above at note 409): *The soul of my lord will be bound in the bundle of life*. In the *Zohar*, this *bundle* can refer to the celestial Garden of Eden or to *Shekhinah*, source and destination of all souls. See *Zohar* 1:65b, 224b; 2:11a, 36b, 54a; 3:24b–25a, 70b, 71b, 92a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 123; *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 61 (75–76).

Glory of YHVH refers to *Shekhinah*, the Divine Presence. On “above” and “under” the sun, see above, note 406.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Then your light will burst through like the dawn and your healing quickly sprout. Your righteousness* [or: *vindicator*] *will march before you, the glory of YHVH will gather you in* [or: *will be your rear guard*].

411. ***righteousness…*** Or *victory* or *justness*.

412. **Temple was built… in judgment…** Corresponding to *Shekhinah*, who conveys divine Judgment. In the time to come, the Temple will be rebuilt and established on a higher rung, *Tif’eret*, known as צדקה (*Tsedaqah*), Righteousness; and this new Temple itself will be called Righteousness.

The verse in Jeremiah 23 actually refers to the name of the Messiah, who will reign in Jerusalem at the site of the Temple. The full verse in Jeremiah 32 reads: *This city* [not *This house*] *has aroused My anger and My wrath from the day that they built it until this day, so I will remove it from My sight*. The phrase *this house* appears in a related context in Jeremiah 7:11.

413. ***You stretched out… You raised…*** Quoting *Targum Onqelos*’s paraphrase of the verse. Earlier (at note 364), this is interpreted to mean that God raised and withdrew His right hand (*Ḥesed*), thereby eliminating blessings and goodness, and enabling *Din* (Judgment)—His left hand—to destroy the Egyptians.

414. **He said to the earth…** God insisted that the Egyptians receive a proper burial. When the earth refused

to accept them, God swore to her by His right hand that He would not punish her for holding their corpses. The Egyptians were accorded this honor because Pharaoh had admitted: *This time I have sinned! YHVH is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong* (Exodus 9:27).

See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 9; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:12; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:37; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Midrash Tehillim* 22:17; above at note 102; Cf. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 17, 39; and David Luria, ad loc. (39), n. 62.

415. **separating the left…** Not by raising the *right hand* (see above, note 413), but by stretching it to the side, with the same result.

416. ***in Your love… Your right hand…*** *Ḥesed* (*love*) is symbolized by God's *right hand* and known as *Gedullah*, Greatness.

Rabbi El'azar correlates the verse in Exodus with the verse in Psalms, which reads in full: *For not by their sword did they possess the land, nor did their arm bring them victory; but Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your face, for You delighted in them*.

417. ***Your might—Gevurah*, Power…** *Gevurah* (Power) is symbolized by God's left *arm* and identified as *might*.

418. ***Your holy abode*—Righteousness…** Referring to *Tif'eret*. Thus the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* are all included in the verse from Exodus (and in the verse from Psalms).

On *Tif'eret* as Righteousness, see above, note 412. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MmD*.

419. **אימתה (*Eimatah*), *Terror*… verse should read אימה (*eimah*)…** Why this rare form of the word with the extra ת (*tav*)? Rabbi Shim'on answers by dividing the word in two: ה אימת (*eimat he*), which means "fear of *Shekhinah*," who is symbolized by the feminine marker ה (*he*).

On the principle that every element of Torah contains secret meaning, see above, note 331.

420. תביאמו (*Tevi'emo*), ***You will bring them*... verse should read** תביאם (*tevi'em*)... Why the apparently superfluous ו (*vav*)? Rabbi Shim'on explains that this letter (which appears in the name יהוה [*YHVH*] and whose numerical value is six) symbolizes *Tif'eret* (together with the five *sefirot* surrounding him, *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). Upon entering the land of Canaan, Joshua completely circumcised "the later generation" of Israelites who had been born in the wilderness. He not only circumcised them but also performed the act of *peri'ah*, "uncovering" the corona, thereby revealing in them the mark of the divine name—the letter י (*yod*) of יהוה (*YHVH*)—and linking them to *Tif'eret*, symbolized by *vav*. See above, note 375.

Those who are circumcised and preserve sexual purity attain the rung of *Yesod*, the divine phallus (and extension of *Tif'eret*), who is known as Righteous. They alone are worthy of inheriting the land of Israel, symbolized by *Shekhinah*.

See Joshua 5:2–9; above, pp. 78–79, n. 30; p. 197, n. 198.

In rabbinic literature, the mark of circumcision is identified with the י (*yod*) of the name שדי (*Shaddai*), which is also the initial letter of יהוה (*YHVH*). See *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 14, *Shemini* 8; *Zohar* 1:13a, 56a, 60a, 89a, 93a, 95a–b; 2:36a, 87b, 216b; 3:13b, 142a (*IR*), 215b, 220a, 256a (*RM*), 266a; Wolfson, "Circumcision and the Divine Name"; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 29–48.

On the prophetic significance of the spelling תביאמו (*tevi'emo*), see BT *Bava Batra* 119b. The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Your people, all of them righteous, will inherit the land forever—sprout of My planting, work of My hands, that I may be glorified*.

421. **for those later ones the word arouses...** The extra ו (*vav*) in תביאמו (*tevi'emo*), *You will bring them*, and ותטעמו (*ve-titta'emo*), *You will plant them*, alludes to the later generation circumcised by Joshua and thereby linked with *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by this letter.

For the full verse in Isaiah, see the preceding note.

422. **Happy is the share…** Those who chant the Song at the Sea (Exodus 15) as part of the daily liturgy will prove worthy of singing it in the afterlife. See above, note 283.

The song includes all twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet and ten references to the name *YHVH*, which parallel the ten utterances by which the world was created and the ten *sefirot*. Together these numbers total thirty-two, signifying the "thirty-two wondrous paths of wisdom" by which God created the world, according to *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1–2. The Song at the Sea is written in the Torah in thirty lines, along with one blank line preceding and another following it, totaling thirty-two.

On the ten utterances, see above, p. 152, n. 52. On the relation between the name *YHVH* and the ten *sefirot*, see above, note 325.

423. **As Israel was standing…** Their vision of God surpassed even those of Isaiah and Ezekiel. See above, note 324.

424. **uniform words, not deviating…** Rabbi Shim'on indicates that all of Israel sang this song miraculously in perfect unison, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Cf. the less fantastic description in *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on Exodus 15:1; M *Sotah* 5:4; *Tosefta Sotah* 6:2; JT *Sotah* 5:4, 20c; BT *Sotah* 30b.

425. **those in their mothers' wombs…** As described above at note 324.

"Seeing eye-to-eye" means seeing God directly. See Numbers 14:14; Isaiah 52:8; *Zohar* 1:91a, 205a; 2:83b, 94a, 126a; 3:143a (*IR*). "Sweetly drunk" renders מתבסמאן (*mitbasseman*), "intoxicated" or "sweetened." See BT *Bava Batra* 73b, where the Israelites who died wandering in the wilderness are described as "appearing as if they were inebriated." See *Tosafot*, ad loc.

426. ***Moses made Israel journey…*** According to a midrashic tradition, the Israelites did not want to journey

on from the Red Sea because they were attracted by the rich booty of the dead Egyptians.

See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beshallaḥ* 16. For a different explanation, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:22.

Rabbi Shim'on interprets the place-name *Shur* according to the verb שור (*shur*), "to gaze." See Numbers 23:9; 24:17; Job 7:8; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 15:22.

427. ***Water* is nothing but Torah...** Torah sustains life and quenches the thirst for wisdom.

See *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:22; BT *Bava Qamma* 82a; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 19; *Zohar* 1:12b.

428. **who gave them Torah here?...** The Israelites had not yet reached Mount Sinai and heard God's word, so how can the verse in Exodus 15 allude to Torah?

429. **blessed Holy One is called Torah...** In Kabbalah, Torah is pictured as God's name, revealing His essence. Rabbi El'azar explains that since God removed His glory from the wilderness, the Israelites *did not find water* —that is, they did not find God, who is called Torah, which is symbolized by *water*.

On Torah as God's name, see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 548; Naḥmanides, introduction to Commentary on the Torah, 6–7; *Zohar* 2:87a, 90b, 124a; 3:13b, 19a, 21a, 35b–36a, 73a, 89b, 98b, 159a, 265b, 298b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 341–42; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 37–44; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1085–86; Idel, "Tefisat ha-Torah."

430. **alien dominion of other nations...** Samael, the demonic power ruling over the heavenly princes of other nations and inhabiting the wilderness.

The place-name מרה (*marah*) means "bitter," referring to the bitterness of desert springs, and here to the bitter quality of the demonic power, who sought to seduce Israel to sin and accuse them.

See *Bahir* 107 (161); *TZ* 60, 93a. On the wilderness as the abode of demonic forces, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 32:10; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 17:7; *Zohar* 1:14b, 126a, 169b, 178b, 228a; 2:157a, 184a, 236b–237a; 3:63b. On the expression "sweetly drunk," see above, note 425.

431. ***tree* is nothing but Torah...** Torah is identified with the Tree of Life, based on the description of wisdom in Proverbs. In Kabbalah both Torah and Tree of Life symbolize *Tif'eret* (known as the blessed Holy One). Here, according to Rabbi Shim'on, *YHVH showed him a tree* means that God revealed Himself to Moses, since *tree* means Torah, and Torah means the blessed Holy One. This divine manifestation removed the demonic bitterness from the water.

On Torah as *tree* and Tree of Life, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 47; BT *Berakhot* 32b, *Arakhin* 15b; *Zohar* 1:152b, 168a, 174b, 193a; 3:53b, 260a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 330.

On the *tree* in Exodus 15:25 as Torah, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:25; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beshallaḥ* 18. On the *tree* in Exodus 15:25 as the Tree of Life, see *Bahir* 107 (161); *Yalqut ha-Makhiri*, Proverbs 3:18; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 15:25, n. 261*.

The verse in Exodus concludes: *and he threw it into the water, and the water turned sweet. There He set him statute and law, and there He tested him*.

432. ***Tree* is nothing but the blessed Holy One...** Rabbi Abba offers a direct proof-text for the divine significance of *tree*. According to his interpretation of the verse in Deuteronomy, *Tif'eret*—האדם (*ha-adam*), *the* [divine] *human*, Primordial Adam—is *a tree* planted in the *field* of *Shekhinah*, who is Herself known as "field of holy apples."

The sweetening of the bitter water transformed the demonic power from Israel's accuser into their advocate.

The image of the "field of holy apples" derives from an interpretation of Genesis 27:27: *He* [Isaac] *smelled the fragrance of his* [Jacob's] *garments and blessed him and said, "See, the fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH."* See BT *Ta'anit* 29b in the name of Rav: *"Like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH*… Like the fragrance of a field of apple trees."

In Kabbalah the apple orchard symbolizes *Shekhinah*. She is filled with apple trees, namely, the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who are symbolized by the three patriarchs and whose respective colors all appear in the apple: the white pulp, the red skin, and the green stem.

See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 35–37; *Zohar* 1:36a, 85a–b, 122a, 128b, 139a, 142b, 143b, 224b, 249b; 2:61b, 84b; 3:74a, 84a–b, 88a, 133b (*IR*), 135b (*IR*), 286b–287a, 288a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 365.

The verse in Deuteronomy warns those who are besieging a town not to destroy its fruit trees; it then asks rhetorically: *For is the tree of the field a human, to withdraw from you in the siege*? Here, the rhetorical question is turned into a declarative statement: *For the human is a tree of the field*. See *Zohar* 3:202a–b; cf. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 21.

433. **At first, Israel… did not enter properly…** The Israelites had undergone circumcision in Egypt (see above, p. 161, n. 74), thereby entering the realm of *Shekhinah*, but they had not completed the ritual, which involves two steps. First the foreskin is cut and removed, disclosing the mucous membrane, which is then torn down the center and pulled back, revealing the corona. The act of tearing and pulling back the membrane is called פריעה (*peri'ah*), "uncovering" the corona. See M *Shabbat* 19:6: "If one circumcises but does not uncover the circumcision, it is as if he has not circumcised."

Here Rabbi Abba indicates that because Israel had not yet "uncovered" the corona, they had not revealed the "holy insignia"—alluding to the letter י (*yod*), which symbolizes the corona (and *Yesod*) and appears in the name שדי (*Shaddai*) and at the beginning of יהוה (*YHVH*). See above, note 420. Now that the Israelites arrived at Marah in the wilderness, they were instructed to fulfill the *statute and law* of circumcision completely, thereby entering the "two parts" of *Shekhinah* and *Yesod* (symbolized respectively by *statute* and *law*).

In rabbinic literature, the verse *There He set them statute and law* is applied to other fundamental laws, such as Sabbath, courts of law, sexual morality, and honoring one's parents. See *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 1; BT *Sanhedrin* 56b.

On *peri'ah*, see *Zohar* 1:13a, 32a (*Tos*), 32a–b, 93b, 96b, 98b (*ST*), 238b; 2:3b, 40a, 125b; 3:91b, 95b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 133; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (67). On the enactment of *peri'ah* at Marah, see *Zohar* 2:40a, 125b. On חק (*ḥoq*), *statute*, as alluding to circumcision, see *Tosefta Berakhot* 6:13; BT *Shabbat* 137b; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 20; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥayyei Sarah* 3, 6; *Shemot Rabbah* 19:4. On *statute and law* as alluding respectively to *Shekhinah* and Her partner, see *Zohar* 2:40a; cf. 3:113a.

The verse in Proverbs demonstrates that *ḥoq* (which means both "statute" and "portion") applies to *Shekhinah*, who provides *a portion* for the angels (*her maidens*). The verse in Psalms demonstrates that *law* applies to *Yesod*, who is an extension of *Tif'eret*, symbolized by Jacob.

434. **נסהו (*nissahu*), *He raised him...*** The simple sense of the verb here is *He tested him*, but Rabbi Abba apparently interprets it midrashically, based on the noun נס (*nes*), "flag, banner."

Cf. *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 9; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 20:16; *Bereshit Rabbah* 55:1, 6; *Zohar* 1:140a; 3:18a.

435. **Book of Rav Yeiva Sava...** Rav Yeiva the Elder, a minor figure in the Babylonian Talmud, assumes a prominent role in the *Zohar*, culminating in *Sava de-*

Mishpatim (2:94b–114a), where he appears as a donkey-driver who turns out to be a master of wisdom.

The *Zohar* frequently cites his book, one of the many volumes housed in a real or imaginary library. See Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 25; and the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, on *Zohar* 1:7a: "All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*… have been lost in the wanderings of exile…. Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*." For a catalogue of these books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*.

On Rav Yeiva, see BT *Pesaḥim* 103b, *Bava Qamma* 49b, *Ḥullin* 86b; *Zohar* 1:47b, 79b, 117b, 225a; 2:6a, 77a, 206b; 3:7b, 155b, 289a (*IZ*), 290a (*IZ*), 295a (*IZ*).

The verse under discussion here (Exodus 15:25) reads: *YHVH showed him a piece of wood* [or: *a tree*], *and he threw it into the water, and the water turned sweet*. According to Rabbi Abba, Rav Yeiva interpreted *a piece of wood* as referring to Moses' staff, which was engraved with the divine name and was thus capable of sweetening the bitter water.

See *ZḤ* 30d (*MhN*). Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 15:25; *Zohar* 3:124b; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:14–15, n. 82; Scholem. On Moses' staff, see above, note 118; pp. 107–8, n. 137.

436. ***He said…*** The full verse reads: *He said, "If you really heed the voice of YHVH your God, and do what is right in His eyes, and hearken to His commands and keep all His statutes, all the sickness that I imposed upon Egypt I will not impose upon you, for I am YHVH your healer."* According to the simple sense of the verse the speaker is obviously God, but Rabbi Abba focuses on the anonymous pronoun *He*, which by itself implies *Tif'eret*, the blessed Holy One.

Cf. *Zohar* 1:102b, 115a, 138a, 142b, 144b, 173b; 2:125b, 131a, 157a.

437. **anonymous speech…** Rabbi Ḥizkiyah offers a different interpretation: the anonymous wording *He said*

alludes to *Shekhinah*, who instructs the people to listen to *the voice of YHVH*, namely *Tif'eret*. Similarly in Exodus 24, *He said* refers to *Shekhinah*, who anonymously tells Moses, *Ascend to YHVH*, namely to *Tif'eret*. See the list of *Zohar* passages in the preceding note.

438. **It is implied by what is written…** Rabbi Yose agrees with Rabbi Abba that the speaker is *Tif'eret* (*YHVH*), but he finds this implied in the previous verse, which specifies *YHVH* twice.

439. ***voice of YHVH…*** Why doesn't the verse read *He said, "If you really heed My voice…"*? Rabbi Yose explains that the wording means *He* [*Tif'eret*] *said, "If you really heed the voice of YHVH*—namely, *Shekhinah*, the divine *voice*, or potency, that the Israelites had entered through their initial circumcision.

See above, note 433. For other interpretations, see *OY*; *MmD*.

440. **After the holy insignia…** By completing the second phase of circumcision, Israel entered both *Shekhinah* and *Yesod* (see above, note 433). Having done so, they entered two other divine realms, namely *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, which convey the blessed flow of emanation to *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*. Thereby, Israel reached King *Tif'eret*.

441. **Holy King… Assembly of Israel** *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18.

442. ***right…*** **Righteous One** *Yesod*, who is stationed in the middle of the sefirotic tree, between the right and left sides; thus, He is ישר (*yashar*), *right* (or *straight*).

On Righteous One as a name of *Yesod*, see above, p. 78 and n. 30.

443. **whoever guards this holy sign…** Whoever completely fulfills the command of circumcision and preserves sexual purity enters *Shekhinah* and *Yesod*, and

thereby also *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, finally attaining the rung of *Tif'eret*.

Netsaḥ and *Hod* are pictured as the two divine testicles, conveying seed to *Yesod*, the divine phallus, thereby stimulating union.

444. **entering all four** *Netsaḥ, Hod, Yesod* (which is itself an extension of King *Tif'eret*), and *Shekhinah*.

445. **guarding this holy sign from four things...** By guarding himself from these four sexual sins, a man preserves the sanctity of all four *sefirot*: *Netsaḥ, Hod, Yesod*, and *Shekhinah*.

This list of sins reflects the social reality of Jewish life in thirteenth-century Castile. See Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 51–54 (63–67); Baer, "Todros ben Yehudah ha-Levi u-Zmano," 31–44; idem, *History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:250–63; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1371–72; Assis, "Sexual Behavior in Mediaeval Hispano-Jewish Society"; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 51; Idel, *Kabbalah and Eros*, 118.

On these four sexual sins, see BT *Sanhedrin* 82a. On the menstruant and the Gentile woman, see above, pp. 9–13 and accompanying notes. On the connection between Marah and sexual sin, see *Zohar* 3:124b.

446. **Therefore, *the voice of YHVH your God…*** The divine declaration—*If you really heed the voice of YHVH your God*…—alludes to these sexual sins and their cosmic impact. By guarding himself against contact with a menstruant, a man attains the presence of *Shekhinah*, who is known as Assembly of Israel and *the voice of YHVH your God* (above, note 439). Conversely, if a man approaches a menstruant, he exposes the nakedness of *Shekhinah*, thereby suspending Her union with *Yesod* and making Her vulnerable to demonic forces. The last sentence apparently means that by maintaining the proper distance from a menstruant, one ensures the union of *Shekhinah* with the linked "elements" *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*.

On the last sentence, see *MM*; Scholem. On the verse in Leviticus, see *Zohar* 1:126b; 3:79a–b, 290b (*IZ*).

447. ***right in His eyes… eyes of YHVH…*** The verse in Psalms demonstrates that God's *eyes* are associated with *the righteous* and thus with *Yesod*, who is known as Righteous One. See above, note 442; *Zohar* 1:164a.

If a man has intercourse with a slave-girl, he empowers the demonic *slave-girl* (Lilith), who then supplants *her mistress* (*Shekhinah*) and joins with *Yesod*, receiving from Him the flow of emanation.

See *Zohar* 1:122a–b, 131b, 190b, 204a; 3:69a, 266a; Idel, *Kabbalah and Eros*, 120–22. The verses in Proverbs read: *At three things the earth trembles, four it cannot bear: a slave becoming a king, a scoundrel sated with food, a loathsome woman getting married, and a slave-girl supplanting her mistress*.

448. **being wary not to betray it…** By inserting the sign of circumcision into a Gentile woman. The verse from Samuel—*Moreover*, נצח (*netsaḥ*), *the Eternal One of, Israel* לא ישקר (*lo yeshaqqer*), *does not deceive*—demonstrates that *Netsaḥ* is incompatible with שקר (*sheqer*), "lie, deception, betrayal."

Preserving the covenant of circumcision and maintaining sexual purity are equivalent to the fulfillment of the whole Torah. See *Tosefta Nedarim* 2:6; BT *Nedarim* 32a; *Maḥazor Vitri*, 624; *Zohar* 1:197a; 3:13b; Wolfson, "Circumcision and the Divine Name," 104–5. The *gimatriyya* of the word ברית (*berit*), "covenant" of circumcision, is equal to 612, the number of all the other commandments in the Torah.

According to the *Zohar*, the sin of lying down with a foreign woman is tantamount to bowing down to another god; both constitute acts of betrayal. See *Zohar* 1:131b, 189b; 2:3b, 87b, 90a, 243a; 3:13b; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*), 78c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 212–13; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 51 (63). Cf. *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21; below, p. 513 and n. 536.

According to BT *Horayyot* 8a, the prohibition against idolatry "is equivalent to all the commandments."

449. ***Gird your sword…*** One should arm himself against sexual temptation with the awe of *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by a sword.

On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 1:240b. On *Shekhinah* as "sword," see *Zohar* 1:53b, 66a–b, 237a, 238b, 240b; 2:26a, 28b, 54a, 66a; 3:19b, 30b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 69, 213.

450. ***Upon the thigh*... holy sign...** *Thigh* signifies the sign of circumcision, which must be guarded.

The context in Genesis (24:2–4) reads: *Abraham said to his servant, elder of his household, who ruled over all that was his, "Place your hand under my thigh, and I will have you swear by YHVH, God of heaven and God of earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanite in whose midst I dwell. Rather, to my land and to my kindred you shall go, and shall take a wife for my son, for Isaac."* See *Zohar* 1:181b.

The same clause appears in Genesis 47:29 (recording Jacob's request to Joseph): *If I have found favor in your eyes, place your hand under my thigh and act toward me with steadfast kindness—please do not bury me in Egypt*. See *Zohar* 1:222b.

451. **overpower your evil impulse...** Which is like a threatening *sword*. See M *Avot* 4:1, in the name of Ben Zoma: "Who is mighty? One who subdues his impulse." See *Zohar* 1:240b.

The *sefirot* are pictured as divine garments. Here נצח (*netsaḥ*) is understood as "glory," equivalent to הדר (*hadar*), *majesty*, in the verses from Psalms.

452. **He admonished them about that very element...** Earlier (above at note 428), Rabbi Yeisa had wondered how the reference to water in Exodus 15 could possibly allude to Torah, since the Torah had not yet been given to the Israelites. Here, Rabbi Yitsḥak explains that God commanded them only about the *statute and law* of circumcision. Cf. above, note 433.

453. **When He wanted to admonish Israel about Torah...** Later, when God gave the Torah at Sinai, He spoke sweetly to Israel, calling them His *treasure* and *a kingdom of priests and a holy nation* (Exodus 19:5–6). Such blandishments were unnecessary here at Marah, where God commanded Israel only concerning circumcision.

On the educational strategy, see Maimonides on M *Sanhedrin* 10:1.

454. **By uncovering this sign…** By completing the ritual of circumcision through the act of *peri'ah*, "uncovering" the corona. See above, note 433.

455. **entered the portion of Righteous One…** Entered *Yesod* by completing circumcision and maintaining sexual purity.

Yesod is known as זה (*zeh*), *this*; and each *sefirah* constitutes one of the cosmic days. The verse in Exodus 19 implies that Israel approached Sinai *on this day*—by entering the realm of *this*. Similarly, in the verse from Isaiah the expressions *this is our God* and *this is YHVH* allude to *Yesod*.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *On the third new moon after the Children of Israel's going out from the land of Egypt, on this day they came to the Wilderness of Sinai*. On the wording *on this day*, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:21; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 7, 13. On the verse in Isaiah, see above, note 329. On *Yesod* as *zeh*, see above, p. 173 and n. 123.

456. ***Look, I am about to rain down bread for you…*** God announces that He will provide manna for the Israelites, who complained that they had nothing to eat.

457. ***Happy is one who considers the poor…*** Rabbi Yehudah interprets the word דל (*dal*)—"poor, helpless, powerless"—in the sense of "sick." Cf. 2 Samuel 13:4. One who is gravely ill is, in effect, imprisoned by God, his limbs warring one another, his appetite gone. Cf. Job 33:19–22.

"Dungeon" renders אטרוניא (*itronya*), based on אטרון (*itron*), "watchman." See *Targum Yonatan*, Isaiah 9:13; 19:15. "Fetters" renders טפסרא (*tafsera*), perhaps based on טופסא (*tufsa*), "mold, form." For the sense of "chains," see *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 178. Cf. the biblical term טפסר (*tifsar*), "military or administrative official" (Jeremiah 51:27; Nahum 3:17).

On the verse in Psalms as referring to the sick, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:1; BT *Nedarim* 40a; *Midrash Tehillim* 41:2; *Zohar* 2:250b (*Heikh*); 3:299a. On sickness as being confined or imprisoned, see BT *Shabbat* 32a; *Zohar* 2:199a, 252a (*Heikh*); 3:299a–b.

458. **guardian…** An angelic advocate who testifies before the heavenly court, recounting the person's virtues and good deeds. Such an advocate appears if the sick person is stimulated to turn back to God by someone visiting him. This visitor will eventually be rewarded, as implied by the wording of the verse. Cf. Job 33:23–27.

Here Rabbi Yehudah understands משכיל (*maskil*) not as *considers* but as *enlightens*. See *Zohar* 2:250b (*Heikh*); cf. *Midrash Tehillim* 41:3. On the range of meaning of דל (*dal*), see the preceding note. On the heavenly advocate, see *Zohar* 2:249a (*Heikh*), 252a (*Heikh*).

459. ***considers the poor…*** **reward of the poor…** *Happy is one who considers* and understands how greatly the poor will be rewarded for enduring such suffering.

For another reading and interpretation, see Vital. Cf. *Sullam*.

460. **they are closer to the King…** God is closer to the brokenhearted or those in need.

See Psalms 34:19; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 7:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:5; *Shemot Rabbah* 31:13; *Zohar* 1:10b; 2:86b; 3:9a, 195a; *ZḤ* 77c (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. 2:218a; 3:90b.

461. **only in soul…** Because his body is broken.

462. **Whirling scale, whirling scale…** The heavenly voice announces that the poor man's soul is about to depart this world before its time.

"Whirling scale" renders טילקא (*tilqa*), apparently a variant of the Zoharic term טיקלא (*tiqla*), based playfully on the root תקל (*tql*), "to weigh, balance." In the *Zohar, tiqla*'s range of meaning includes "scale, potter's wheel, hollow of the hand, fist, water-clock." Here the term may refer to the

cosmic scale of justice, in which a soul's good and bad deeds are weighed after death. See *Zohar* 2:252a (*Heikh*). Alternatively, the reference could be to a "wheel" that will whirl the soul.

On *tiqla*, see Vol. 2, p. 8, n. 51; p. 82, n. 634; p. 158, n. 320; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 178; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 327–35 (esp. 331–33). For various interpretations of the term here, see *DE*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

463. **fig juice mixed with palm stalk from a tub…** Rabbi Yeisa administers a remedy, healing the sick poor man.

The partly conjectural translation renders אפותא דקופתא מיא דגרגרין (*mayya de-gargerin afuta de-qufta*). On *mayya de-gargerin* as "fig juice," see the story in BT *Gittin* 56a about Rabbi Zadok sucking juice from גרוגרות (*gerogarot*), "figs," after extensive fasting. Alternatively, *gargerin* may refer to גרגירא (*gargira*), the herb "rocket," whose medicinal properties are indicated in rabbinic literature. See BT *Shabbat* 109a, *Yoma* 18b, *Avodah Zarah* 10b. Cf. M *Menaḥot* 8:3, which mentions גרגרים (*gargerim*), "dried olives," soaked in water. See Galante (who suggests "pomegranate juice," made from גרגרים [*gargerim*], "berries," seeds of pomegranate); *DE*; *NO*; *NZ*.

אפותא (*Afuta*) may derive from אופתא (*uppeta*), "stalk, stump of the date palm." The medicinal properties of the palm are well known. Cf. אפתא (*afta*), "tuber," in *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:51. The simple sense of *afuta* is "forehead, brow," which doesn't seem to fit here, unless the author is playing on Genesis 3:19: זעת אפיך (*ze'at appekha*), *the sweat of your brow*, since we immediately hear that "sweat broke on [the poor man's] face." See Galante; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 173, s.v. *afuta de-qitpa*; *DE*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *afuta de-qunta*; *MmD*. On *afuta*, "brow," see above, p. 67, n. 296; p. 155, n. 56.

קופתא (*Qufta*) means "basket, tub." See JT *Shabbat* 4:1, 6d; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3 (ed. Higger, ed. Friedlander). Possibly, *qufta* here represents a play on כפות (*kappot*), "palm fronds." See Leviticus 23:40; and BT *Sukkah* 32a, where

uppeta, “stalk,” and *kappot* appear together. Thus the phrase could be rendered: “fig juice (mixed with) the stalk of palm fronds.”

464. **he came and asked him** Rabbi Yeisa came and asked the poor man what had happened to him.

465. **wanted to confer merit upon you…** God wanted to confer upon Rabbi Yeisa the merit of restoring the poor man to life. Rabbi Yeisa’s reward will be that he will participate in a dramatic and profound gathering with Rabbi Shim’on and the Companions, and that he together with Rabbi Yose son of Ya’akov and Rabbi Ḥizkiyah will die in ecstasy and be transported to heaven, where thrones await them.

In the closing sentence, “him” refers to the poor man. “Chamber” renders אדרא (*iddera*), “threshing floor, chamber,” alluding to the assembly with Rabbi Shim’on described in *Zohar* 3:127b–145a (known as *Idra Rabba*, “The Great *Idra*”). The ecstatic death of the three Companions is described in 3:144a. Cf. 1:217a; 3:79a. On the term *iddera*, see Liebes, *Peraqim*, 93–107.

466. ***ma’ah…*** A small silver coin or weight.

467. **Restore my and my children’s…** souls By helping to provide for us. On this story, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:2.

468. **He took it out…** Rabbi Yitsḥak gave him the half *ma’ah*.

469. **He was shown in a dream…** Rabbi Yitsḥak dreamt that he was about to be thrown into the sea. Rabbi Shim’on tried to save him, but he succeeded in doing so only with the help of this poor man—implying that Rabbi Yitsḥak’s generosity toward the poor man helped save his own life.

According to *Zohar* 1:218a, when Rabbi Shim’on saw that Rabbi Yitsḥak was about to be seized by the Angel of Death, he pleaded with God to extend Rabbi Yitsḥak’s life.

Eventually the two of them departed from the world together. See *Zohar* 3:287b (*IZ*).

On a verse falling into one's mouth (that is, being uttered spontaneously), see BT *Berakhot* 55b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "If one rises early and a verse falls into his mouth, this is a minor prophecy."

470. **dew trickles from the Holy Ancient One…** Emanation trickles from its source. Holy Ancient One designates the primordial manifestation of *Ein Sof* through *Keter*. This realm is characterized by pure compassion, and *Keter* is described as אריך אנפין (*arikh anpin*), "slow to anger" (an expression deriving from Exodus 34:6). See *Zohar* 3:129a–b (*IR*). The configuration of *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* through *Yesod* is characterized by a tension between opposites: right and left, loving-kindness and judgment. Relative to the highest realm, this configuration is described as זעיר אפין (*ze'eir appin*), "short-tempered" (deriving from Proverbs 14:17).

The dew of emanation gradually reaches *Shekhinah*, who is described as an orchard filled with sefirotic trees. See above, note 432. From Her it continues on, sustaining the angels. The Israelites too were nourished by this dew when they ate manna in the wilderness.

The verse in Psalms describes the manna as *bread of the mighty*, which may refer to food of the angels. See Septuagint; Wisdom of Solomon 16:20; BT *Yoma* 75b (in the name of Rabbi Akiva); Naḥmanides on Exodus 16:6; *Zohar* 2:101b, 156b.

On the association of manna with dew, see Exodus 16:13–14. On emanation as dew, see Naḥmanides on Exodus 16:6; *Zohar* 1:95b, 143b, 225b, 232a; 2:62b, 88a, 156b, 176b (*SdTs*), 210a; 3:26a, 128b (*IR*), 135a–b (*IR*), 208a, 288a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*). On the angels being nourished by *Shekhinah*, see *Shemot Rabbah* 32:4; *Kallah* 1:17. On manna in the *Zohar*, see Hecker, *Mystical Bodies, Mystical Meals*, 82–115.

471. **Companions, engaging in Torah…** By delving into Torah, they are nourished by something like the manna. The cryptic phrase “two balancing one” is clarified below.

472. **When Israel entered…** At first, when Israel went out of Egypt, they ate *matstsah*, symbolizing *Shekhinah*. Then, when they completed the full ritual of circumcision at Marah by uncovering the corona, they revealed the “holy insignia,” the letter י (*yod*). This enabled them to partake of “higher bread,” namely the manna, which derives from *Tif’eret* (known as *heaven*).

See above, note 433; pp. 196–97 at nn. 195–199.

473. **nourished from another, higher place…** From the *sefirah* of *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom), higher than *Tif’eret* (the source of the manna). Now the meaning of the phrase “two balancing one” becomes surprisingly clear: the spiritual nourishment of the Companions is twice as holy and potent as the manna.

Cf. below, p. 342 and n. 507. The question מאן הוא (*man hu*), “What [literally, who] is it?” may be a play on the question attributed to the Israelites in Exodus 16:15 when they saw the מן (*man*), “manna”: מן הוא (*Man hu*), *What is it?*

474. **why are they weaker…** On the weak physical condition of the Companions, see *Zohar* 2:143a, 198b, 225a–b. Cf. 3:160a. On the debilitating effects of studying Torah, see BT *Sanhedrin* 26b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:14. Cf. BT *Yoma* 71a.

475. **The food that comes from heaven and earth…** Ordinary food of a material nature, which grows from the ground and is watered by rain.

476. **food that comes in Judgment…** *Matstsah*, deriving from *Shekhinah*, who executes divine Judgment. See above, note 472. This food is more דקיקא (*deqiqa*), “fine, refined, rarefied, subtle.”

477. **The food that appeared for Israel at that time…** The manna, even more rarefied and spiritual,

deriving from *Tif'eret* (known as *heaven*). It bypasses the body and nourishes the soul.

On the manna as "fine," see Exodus 16:14. The verse in Numbers, recording a complaint of the Israelites, reads: *The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why did you bring us up from Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no bread and there is no water, and our throat* [or: *very self*] *loathes* בלחם הקלקל (*ba-leḥem ha-qeloqel*), *the wretched bread*. The adjective *qeloqel* (appearing only here in the Bible in this pejorative description of the manna) means "wretched, miserable, despicable, cursed, insubstantial." It probably derives from the root קלל (*qll*), whose range of meaning includes "to be insignificant, treat lightly or with contempt, curse." According to a midrashic interpretation, *qeloqel* indicates that the manna was so קל (*qal*), "light," that it was completely assimilated by the body and required no elimination. Apparently extending this midrashic tradition, Rabbi Shim'on interprets *qeloqel* as "light, insubstantial, immaterial, intangible, subtle, ethereal."

On *qeloqel*, see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 16:24; *Midrash Aggadah*, Numbers 21:4; *Leqaḥ Tov* and *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 16:14. Cf. *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:15; *Sifrei*, Numbers 88; BT *Yoma* 75b; Rashi on Psalms 78:25.

On the spiritual nature of the manna, see Deuteronomy 8:3; Wisdom of Solomon 16:26; Philo, *Deterius* 118. Cf. John 6:30–35.

478. **food of the Companions...** They are nourished and sustained by *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom), which they imbibe through Torah.

רוחא (*Ruḥa*), "spirit," and נשמתא (*nishmeta*), "breath, soul," soul-breath, are the two higher levels of the soul. נפשא (*Nafsha*), "soul," life-force (mentioned in the previous paragraph), is the basic level of the soul, animating the human being.

479. **how can these foods be found now?** Many centuries after biblical times.

480. **where Judgment prevails, called צדק (*Tsedeq*), Justice…** *Shekhinah*, who administers Judgment and is known as *Tsedeq*, Justice. She is the source of *matstsah* and shares with it the designation לחם עני (*leḥem oni*), *bread of poverty* [or: *affliction*] (Deuteronomy 16:3), alluding to Her impoverished state and Her need to be filled by the richness of the higher *sefirot*. Being poor Herself, *Shekhinah* nourishes the poor.

One who helps the poor adds the letter ה (*he*)—a feminine marker—to *Shekhinah*, transforming Her from צדק (*Tsedeq*), Justice, into צדקה (*Tsedaqah*), Charity (or "justness"). Similarly, the verse in Proverbs implies that *a man of* חסד (*ḥesed*), *kindness, benefits Shekhinah*, who is known as *soul*, turning Her harsh quality of Judgment into Compassion.

On the poor, see above at notes 459–69. On *Shekhinah* as *bread of poverty*, see above, pp. 196–97. On *Shekhinah* as *Tsedeq* and the harshness of this quality, see *Bahir* 50 (74–75); *Zohar* 3:80b, 85b, 198b, 291b–292a (*IZ*). On the contrast between *tsedeq* and *tsedaqah*, see Rashi, BT *Ta'anit* 8a, s.v. *she-ne'emar emet*.

481. **from a place called *heaven*…** *Tif'eret* (see above, note 472). This finer food nourishes the sick, as indicated by the verse in Psalms, which specifies the name associated with *Tif'eret*: *YHVH*. Just as the *fat and blood* of sacrifices is offered up to God, so a sick person is sustained by the fat and blood of his own body.

On fat and blood, see *OY*. On offering one's own fat and blood to God by fasting, see BT *Berakhot* 17a; *Zohar* 2:20b (*MhN*), 153a; *ZḤ* 80a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 127–28. Cf. ibid., 79; *Zohar* 3:9b.

On the verse in Psalms, see BT *Shabbat* 12b. On the sick, see above, page 328.

482. **Torah issues from supernal Wisdom…** Torah symbolizes *Tif'eret*, which issues from *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom),

known as Primordial Torah. Those who delve into Torah and discover her hidden meanings derive nourishment from her divine roots.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:5, in the name of Rabbi Avin: "Torah is an unripe fruit of supernal Wisdom." See *Zohar* 1:47b; 2:85a, 121a; 3:81a, 182a, 192b; *ZḤ* 15b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 106–8, 326–30. On the divine nature of Torah, see above, note 429.

483. ***she is your life…*** Rabbi El'azar understands *she* as referring to Torah. The verse reads: *He* [or: *that*] *is your life*…, referring either to God or to loving, heeding, and cleaving to Him (mentioned immediately before). The substitution of היא (*hi*), *she*, for הוא (*hu*), *He* (or *that*), in this verse appears elsewhere, e.g., in *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 2; B, 31; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 15, *Ki Tissa* 15, *Shemini* 11; *Zohar* 1:92a, 168a, 244b. Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi* on the verse; BT *Qiddushin* 40a.

According to Rabbi El'azar, apparently, *your life* refers to this world, *the length of your days* to the world that is coming. See *Targum Yerushalmi* on the verse; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 31; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 11. Cf. *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 14; Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 32:39.

484. ***with favor*** רצון (*Ratson*), "will, favor, desire." The second half of the verse is usually understood to mean *and satisfy the desire of every living thing*, but it can also be rendered: *and satisfy every living thing with favor* [or: *according to Your will*].

485. **whoever offers his prayer… causes that tree… to be blessed…** One who prays daily to God for nourishment draws forth blessing for the sefirotic tree itself, thereby blessing God *day by day*. Therefore, even if one has food, he should still pray for it.

The image of the tree "containing all nourishment" derives from Daniel 4:9. On Israel sustaining God, see Numbers 28:2 and its interpretation in *Tosefta Menaḥot*

7:9; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 15:9; *Shir ha-Shirim* 1:15; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Exodus 418.

486. **not cook food on one day for another day…** Rather, one should pray daily for food, trusting that God will provide. Friday is an exception: on that day a double portion of manna appeared, for both Friday and Sabbath (see Exodus 16:22–30); thus, on every Friday one is permitted to prepare food for Sabbath.

See *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 2, in the name of Rabbi El'azar of Modi'in (or Rabbi Eli'ezer): *"Each day's share on its day…* Whoever has enough to eat today and says, 'What will I eat tomorrow?' is lacking in faith." See *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on Exodus 16:4; BT *Sotah* 48b.

See Exodus 16:19: *Let no one leave any of it over until morning*. Exodus 16:4 concludes: *so that I may test them whether they will follow My teaching or not*. See below at note 514.

487. **What is *favor*?….** רצון (*Ratson*), "will, favor, desire," characterizes the Holy Ancient One—the primordial *sefirah, Keter*, from whom flows emanation and blessing.

On the rendering *satisfy every living thing with favor*, see above, note 484. "Faith" refers to the sefirotic realm, focus of kabbalistic faith.

488. ***Israel in whom I glory…*** When Israel acts virtuously, God is glorified. His glory consists specifically in His wearing tefillin (see Glossary).

On God's wearing tefillin, see BT *Berakhot* 6a; Vol. 1, p. 96, n. 720; Vol. 2, p. 282, n. 186; *Zohar* 3:291a (*IZ*). On tefillin as פארא (*pe'era*), "glory," see *Berakhot* 11a, where the statement in Ezekiel 24:17—*Wrap* פארך (*phe'erekha*), *your turban*—is interpreted as applying to tefillin. פאר (*Pe'er*), "turban," is a homonym of פאר (*pe'er*), "glory." See *Zohar* 2:43a (*Piq*).

"Colors combining gloriously" refers to the various sefirotic colors, which are associated with tefillin and

several of which combine in *Tif'eret* (Glory, Beauty). See *Zohar* 2:43a–b (*Piq*).

489. ***YHVH delights et yere'av, those in awe of Him…*** In this verse the particle את (*et*) marks the direct object יראיו (*yere'av*), *those in awe of Him*. If instead of *et*, the preposition ב (*be*), "in," had appeared, the meaning would could only be: *YHVH delights in…*; but the appearance of et, marking the direct object, stimulates Rabbi Ḥiyya to reimagine the verb רוצה (*rotseh*) not according to the meaning *delights in*, but rather in the transitive sense: *delights* (*those in awe of Him*).

See *Zohar* 1:194b. Cf. Psalms 149:4. *His faithful love* renders חסדו (*ḥasdo*), alluding to the *sefirah* of *Ḥesed*, which conveys daily sustenance.

490. **Rabbi Yeisa Sava…** Rabbi Yeisa the Elder.

This same story appears in *Zohar* 1:199b.

For the formula "Prepare the meal!" (later popularized by Isaac Luria), see *Zohar* 2:88b; 3:93b–94a.

491. **The wicked who walk crookedly…** As the verse in Isaiah indicates, the wicked do not trust that God will provide their food; rather, they rise early to chase after improper food. Further, they hoard food from one day to the next. Conversely, those in awe of God await His sustaining *Ḥesed* (see above, end of note 489) and are content to gather what is provided each day.

On the wicked gathering manna, cf. Exodus 16:20. The phrase תורתי (*torati*), *My Torah*, in Exodus 16:4 is usually rendered *My teaching*.

492. **From here: *A righteous one…*** Rabbi Yitsḥak demonstrates how the righteous act by quoting this verse. The full verse reads: *A righteous one eats to satisfy his appetite* [or: *soul*], *but the belly of the wicked is* [or: *will be*] *empty*—that is, the righteous feel satisfied when they consume what they actually need, but the wicked always want more.

OY and the printed editions add here: “after satisfying his soul with praying and studying Torah”—apparently taking the verse to mean *A righteous one eats upon satisfying his soul*. Cf. BT *Berakhot* 28b.

493. **He distinguished between the scions of faith…** By seeing how the various Israelites would behave in gathering the manna. The wicked gathered more than they needed for a single day; yet, based on the verse in Proverbs, they were still not satisfied. Furthermore, *he who took more had no extra*. Cf. Exodus 16:20. For the full verse in Proverbs, see the preceding note.

On the link between manna and Torah, see the statement attributed to Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai in *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 2: “Only to those who eat manna is it given to expound the Torah.” See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ, Petiḥta*; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:4. In several medieval citations of this statement, the wording is “Only to those who eat manna was the Torah given.” See Rashi on 2 Chronicles 31:4; Joshua ibn Shuaib, *Derashot, Tsav*.

On God providing a sign of *ḥesed*, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12b: “Resh Lakish said, ‘To one who engages in Torah by night, the blessed Holy One extends a thread of *ḥesed* by day.’”

494. **Israel was perfected below…** By eating the manna, food of the angels (see above, note 470). Or, by coming to Elim, as explained below. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MmD*.

495. ***They came to Elim…*** Rabbi Shim’on associates the place-name אלים (*Elim*) with אילים (*eilim*), *terebinths* (see above, note 402). The oasis of Elim corresponds to the cosmic tree: the *twelve springs of water* symbolize the “twelve boundaries” or potencies of the tree on four sides of the world (corresponding to the sefirotic quartet of *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif’eret*, and *Shekhinah*). The *seventy date palms* symbolize the seventy heavenly princes of the nations of the world, all of whom are nourished by the tree.

On the tree and the twelve boundaries, see above, note 399. On the seventy heavenly princes, see above, p. 19, n. 71; *Bahir* 67 (98). The verse in Exodus concludes: *and they encamped there by the water*.

496. **holy dew trickled…** The flow of emanation, likened to dew, trickled from *Keter* (known as the Holy Ancient One) to the configuration of *sefirot* surrounding *Tif'eret* (known as the Short-Tempered One). *Tif'eret* Himself is known as Heaven. The dew then descended further, finally congealing on earth as the manna—*bread from heaven* (Exodus 16:4).

See above, note 470. The verse from Exodus, describing the first appearance of the manna, reads in full: *The layer of dew lifted, and look, on the surface of the wilderness—something fine, flaky, fine as frost on the ground*.

497. **blessed the supernal Name…** They blessed God for the gift of the manna, whose unique fragrance derived from the Garden of Eden, through which it had passed on its journey down to earth. Miraculously, the manna tasted like whatever each one desired. Afterward, they blessed God again by reciting the Grace after Meals, which Moses instituted for this occasion.

According to the sixteenth-century kabbalist Menahem Azariah of Fano (*Ma'amar Shabbetot ha-Shem*, 6), the appropriate blessing before eating the manna is "Blessed are You, *YHVH* our God, King of the world, who brings forth bread from heaven."

On the multiple tastes of the manna, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 89: "The manna was transformed for Israel into whatever they desired." See *Shemot Rabbah* 5:9, in the name of Rabbi Yose son of Ḥanina: "[The manna] descended for Israel according to each and every Israelite: the young men ate it like bread…, the old people *like a wafer in honey* (Exodus 16:31), the sucklings like milk from their mothers' breasts…, the sick like porridge blended with honey."

See BT *Yoma* 75b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:25; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 25; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemot* 22, *Beshallaḥ* 21–22; *Shemot Rabbah* 25:3; *Midrash Tehillim* 23:3.

On Moses instituting the first blessing of the Grace after Meals on this occasion, see BT *Berakhot* 48b, in the name of Rabbi Naḥman. On the generation of the wilderness being "a generation of knowledge," see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 9:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:3; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:23. On the link between manna and Torah, see above, note 493.

498. ***The people would roam around…*** The faithless ones, not trusting that they could eat the manna in its natural state, expended great effort in preparing it.

See BT *Yoma* 75a: "For the righteous, [the manna] fell in front of their homes; the average ones went out and gathered it; the wicked *would roam around and gather it*…. The righteous [experienced the manna] as bread; the average ones, as [dough of] cakes; the wicked *would grind it between millstones*."

The full verse reads: *The people would roam around and gather it and grind it between millstones or pound it in a mortar, cook it in a kettle and make it into cakes. It tasted like the cream of oil*.

499. **those who have no faith…** They do not realize that if they believed in God, He would provide for them.

Cf. *Mekhilta, Shabbeta* (*Ki Tissa*) 1: "When Israel fulfills the will of the Omnipresent…their work is done by others…. And when Israel does not fulfill the will of the Omnipresent… their work is done by themselves."

500. ***like oily cream*—nothing more…**These unbelieving Israelites missed out on the other, miraculous tastes of the manna.

Oily cream renders לשד השמן (*leshad ha-shamen*), *the cream of oil*, apparently referring to the upper layer of the first pressing of olive oil. See Milgrom, *Numbers*, on the verse. For the full verse, see above, note 498.

501. **What is לשד השמן (*leshad ha-shamen*), *cream of oil*?...** For the literal meaning, see the preceding note. The meaning "kneaded in oil" derives from *Targum Onqelos* on the verse.

See BT *Yoma* 75a: *"It tasted like* לשד השמן (*leshad ha-shamen*). Rabbi Abbuha said, 'Just as an infant tastes many flavors from the שַׁד (*shad*), breast [depending on what the mother has eaten], so as long as Israel were eating the manna, they discovered in it many tastes.' Some say, 'לְשֵׁד (*Le-shed*), really! Just as שֵׁד (*shed*), a demon, turns into many colors, so did the manna turn into many tastes.'"

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 89. Rabbi Yehudah's comment alludes to the tradition about the breast.

502. ***Each according to his eating...*** Rabbi Yitsḥak explains that this phrase does not mean "according to how much he would eat," but rather, "according to the number of those who would eat," as exemplified by what follows.

The full verse reads: *They measured by the omer, and he who took more had no extra and he who took less had no lack; each according to his eating had they gathered*. An *omer* is a dry measure, apparently equal to about two quarts. See Sarna, *Exodus*, on 16:16, 36.

503. **If a person held a servant...** This story derives from rabbinic sources. See *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:31; BT *Yoma* 75a.

Each of the three occurrences of "manna" in this paragraph renders מַנָּא (*manna*), "manna," which can also be construed as מָנָא (*mana*), "vessel," i.e., a vessel of manna. Exodus 16:16 reads in full: *This is the thing that YHVH commanded: Gather from it, each man according to his eating, an omer to a head, the number of persons among you, each man for those in his tent you shall take*. On *omer*, see the preceding note.

504. ***At evening you will know...*** Morning is characterized by *Ḥesed* (Love); evening, by *Din* (Judgment). Isaac symbolizes *Din*, so fittingly he instituted the late

afternoon prayer. God brought Israel out of Egypt by executing Judgment upon the Egyptians.

On morning and evening, see *Zohar* 1:132b, 182b, 230a; 2:21a–b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 66–67. On the institution of the daily prayers, see BT *Berakhot* 26b: "Rabbi Yose son of Rabbi Ḥanina said, 'The patriarchs instituted the prayers.'… Abraham instituted the morning prayer…. Isaac instituted the afternoon prayer…. Jacob instituted the evening prayer."

See JT *Berakhot* 4:1, 7a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:9; *Zohar* 1:72a, 230a; 3:121a.

505. **Rabbi Ḥiyya said the opposite…** Each divine quality implicates its polar opposite. When Israel complained to God that they had nothing to eat, Judgment (symbolized by *evening*) aroused, but along with it Love aroused—the Love by which God had redeemed them from Egypt. Similarly, in the morning (the time of Love), *the glory of* YHVH appeared—namely Shekhinah, who is linked with Judgment. This quality of Judgment aroused because of Israel's *grumblings*.

For various interpretations of the question "Why all this?" see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *MmD*. On the simultaneity of opposite divine qualities, see above, p. 163 and n. 81. Exodus 16:3 reads in full: *The Children of Israel said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of* YHVH *in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots, when we ate our fill of bread! For you have brought us out to this wilderness to kill this whole assembly by starvation!"*

Exodus 16:7 reads: *And in the morning you will see the glory of* YHVH *as He hears your grumblings against* YHVH.

506. **the wicked of the world change them…** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:3, in the name of Rabbi Shemu'el son of Naḥman: "Woe to the wicked, who turn the Attribute of Compassion into the Attribute of Judgment."

See *Zohar* 3:30b, 137b (*IR*), 207b.

507. **From this manna the righteous are destined to eat…** In fact, their manna will issue from an even higher source. The manna in the wilderness was *bread from heaven*—namely, from *Tif'eret* (symbolized by *heaven*)—whereas the world that is coming symbolizes *Binah* (also known as *beauty of YHVH*), upon whom the righteous will gaze and by whom they will be nourished.

Cf. above at notes 471–73. On the connection between the verse from Isaiah and the world that is coming, see BT *Berakhot* 34b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "All the prophets prophesied only concerning the days of the Messiah, but as for the world that is coming, *No eye has seen, O God, but You*, [*what You will do for one who awaits You*]."

On the righteous eating manna in the world that is coming, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:25; BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8; Naḥmanides on Exodus 16:6.

On *Binah* as the world that is coming, see above, p. 16, n. 63. On *Binah* as *beauty of YHVH*, see above, note 380; cf. p. 50, n. 214. The full verse in Psalms reads: *One thing I ask of YHVH, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of YHVH all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of YHVH and to contemplate in His temple*.

508. ***See that YHVH has given you Sabbath…*** The verse concludes: *Therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Stay, each where he is; let no one go out from his place on the seventh day*.

509. ***A song of ascents*—anonymous…** Unlike four other similar psalms (122, 124, 131, 133), which open by naming their author (*A song of ascents. Of David*), this particular psalm is anonymous. According to Rabbi Ḥizkiyah, this is because it is intended to be chanted by everyone—apparently referring to the custom of chanting this psalm during the Ten Days of Repentance (from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur).

510. **Whoever offers his prayer…** For the rabbinic application of this verse to prayer, see *Tosefta Berakhot* 3:17; JT *Berakhot* 2:3, 4:4; BT *Berakhot* 10b.

"Aspiration" renders רעותא (*re'uta*), "will, desire, aspiration."

511. **did David really say this?…** How could the author of Psalms mean this, when he says virtually the same thing in an earlier psalm? There must be a deeper meaning.

512. **on the root of all roots…** On the deepest root of the *sefirot, Keter* (or *Ein Sof*). The depth of the well symbolizes *Binah*; the spring (or depth) of all, *Ḥokhmah*. *Binah* is also the river of emanation, issuing from *Ḥokhmah* (symbolized by *Eden*) and flowing via its sefirotic streams (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*) to the garden of *Shekhinah*, who is also called *the city of God*.

Thus, in this psalm, *out of the depths* does not refer primarily to the depths of David's heart or his depths of despair, but rather to two cosmic depths (*Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*), from which David seeks to draw forth the divine flow: *Out of the depths* [in which You are] *I call You* [forth]. Everyone who prays should have this same intention.

See *Zohar* 3:26a, 70a, 265b; Gikatilla, *Sod Yod-Gimel Middot*, 219. For various interpretations, see *OY*; *MM*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1045–46. The full verse in Genesis reads: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*.

513. **Ancient One…** The primordial *sefirah* of *Keter* emanates to *Ḥokhmah* ("supernal depth"), from which *Binah* ("the well") draws, feeding the sefirotic streams.

514. **the world is blessed by that supernal day…** The days of the week correspond to cosmic sefirotic days above. Sunday through Friday symbolize respectively *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, while Sabbath symbolizes *Binah* (and also *Shekhinah*). Each mundane day is blessed by its supernal day, all six of which are blessed by the seventh day, *Binah*. Thus

every day conveys a unique blessing to the world, and therefore Moses insisted that each day's portion of manna should be consumed on that particular day. See *Zohar* 2:88a; 3:92a.

515. **the sixth day includes more…** On Friday a double portion of manna appeared, for both that day and Sabbath (see Exodus 16:22–30). Friday symbolizes *Yesod*, who contains His own blessing and that of *Shekhinah* (who shares the symbol of Sabbath with *Binah*).

In the account of Creation each day is named, but only the sixth day appears with the definite article ה (*ha*), *the*. Another explanation had already been provided for this phenomenon, but here Rabbi El'azar teaches that this letter —which often serves as a feminine marker—alludes to *Shekhinah*, the feminine Divine Presence, who is often symbolized by the final letter of the name יהוה (*YHVH*). This spelling thus indicates that *Shekhinah* (*the*) joins with *Yesod* (*sixth day*), in preparation for Her union with King *Tif'eret* on Sabbath eve. The double portion of manna includes enough for Friday and for the wedding feast of Sabbath.

On the *ha* of *yom ha-shishi*, see BT *Shabbat* 88a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "Why is it written: *There was evening and there was morning*, יום הששי (*yom ha-shishi*), *the sixth day*? Why the extra letter ה (*he*)? This teaches that the blessed Holy One stipulated a condition with the works of Creation, saying to them: 'If Israel accepts the Torah [given at Mount Sinai on "the sixth day" of the month of Sivan], you will endure. If not, I will return you to *chaos and void* (Genesis 1:2).'"

See *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; *Zohar* 1:47a. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 9:14. On the Sabbath meals, see *Zohar* 2:88a–b. On the table as a feminine sexual symbol, cf. the metaphorical image in BT *Nedarim* 20a.

516. **all six days are blessed…** Deriving their blessing from the Sabbath union of the divine couple, which conveys the flow from *Binah*.

On Sabbath as source of blessing for the entire week, see *Bahir* 105 (159), where, however, Sabbath symbolizes *Yesod*.

On the need for the table not to be empty, see BT *Sanhedrin* 92a: "Rabbi El'azar said, 'Whoever does not leave bread on his table [when reciting the Grace after Meals] will never see a sign of blessing.'"

See Naḥmanides on Exodus 25:24; *Zohar* 1:88a, 240a, 250a; 2:67a, 87b, 88a, 153b, 155a, 157b; 3:34a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 270.

517. **disciples of the wise…** Knowing that the divine couple unites every Sabbath eve, they imitate this practice.

The Mishnah (*Ketubbot* 5:6) discusses how often husbands of various professions are required to fulfill the commandment of עונה (*onah*), "conjugal rights," i.e., to satisfy their wives sexually. According to Rabbi Eli'ezer, "The *onah* mentioned in the Torah [applies as follows]: Those who are unoccupied, every day; laborers, twice a week; donkey-drivers, once a week; camel-drivers, once every thirty days; sailors, once every six months."

The Talmud (BT *Ketubbot* 62b) adds: "When is the *onah* of the disciples of the wise? [i.e., What is the proper interval between two successive times of fulfilling this *mitsvah*?] Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shemu'el, 'From one Sabbath eve to the next.'"

See *Zohar* 1:14a–b, 50a, 112a (*MhN*); 2:89a–b, 136a–b, 204b–205a; 3:49b, 78a, 81a, 82a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1232–33; Wolfson, "Eunuchs Who Keep the Sabbath."

518. ***YHVH has given you Sabbath…*** Symbolizing *Binah*, on which all the other days (symbolizing the *sefirot* beneath Her) find their rest and renewal.

The verse concludes: *Therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Stay, each where he is; let no one go out from his place on the seventh day.*

519. **Assembly of Israel is also called Sabbath…** Rabbi Yeisa adds that *Shekhinah* (Assembly of Israel) is also called Sabbath. He is alluding to a midrashic tradition in *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:8, where according to Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai, Sabbath complains to God that she has no mate among the days of the week, and she is told: "The Assembly of Israel is your mate." Here, apparently, Rabbi Yeisa means that since, based on this midrash, *Shekhinah* (Assembly of Israel) is the mate of Sabbath, She shares its name. Kabbalistically, She is the bride of *Tif'eret*.

On Sabbath as bride, see BT *Shabbat* 119a; *Bava Qamma* 32a–b. On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18. On Israel's exclusive right to Sabbath, see *Mekhilta, Shabbeta* (*Ki Tissa*) 1; *Shemot Rabbah* 25:11.

Exodus 31:17 reads in full: *Between Me and the Children of Israel it is a sign forever that in six days YHVH made heaven and earth and on the seventh day He ceased and was refreshed*.

The context in Isaiah (58:13–14) reads: *If you refrain from trampling Sabbath, from engaging in your affairs on My holy day, and call Sabbath "delight," the holy of YHVH "honored"; if you honor it by not going your own ways, pursuing your affairs, or speaking a word, then you will delight in YHVH, and I will set you astride the heights of the earth and feed you with the inheritance of Jacob your father —for the mouth of YHVH has spoken*. The first verse is expounded above, pp. 224–25.

520. **[64a]** The passage from the bottom of 63b to the top of 64a does not appear in numerous manuscripts that I have checked nor in the Cremona edition. (It does appear in *OY* and in the Mantua edition.) The same passage appears in a longer form in *Zohar* 2:207a and will be translated there. Apparently a scribe or editor copied it here because it discusses the conclusion of Exodus 16:29: *Let no one go out from his place on the seventh day*. See *MM*.

521. ***Pass before the people…*** The Israelites complain that they have no water to drink. God tells Moses to take his staff and strike the rock at Horeb, from which water will flow. The verse reads: *and your staff*…

522. **Sennacherib…** King Sennacherib of Assyria swept through Judah and threatened Jerusalem in 701 B.C.E. The full verse in 2 Kings 19 reads: *That night an angel of YHVH went out and struck one hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp. The people arose early in the morning and behold, they were all dead corpses!*

523. **Jeroboam son of Nebat…** The first king of the northern kingdom of Israel, who had golden calves built in Bethel and Dan to dissuade the people from going to the Temple in the southern kingdom of Judah. See 1 Kings 12:25–33. In the following chapter of Kings, a prophet from Judah comes to Bethel and prophesies the destruction of the altar. *When the king heard the word of the man of God that he had proclaimed against the altar in Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand above the altar, saying, "Seize him!" But his hand that he stretched out against him withered; he could not draw it back*. In Kings *the man of God* is not named, but he is traditionally identified as Iddo.

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 2:6; *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 12; *Zohar* 3:156b, 288a (*IZ*). On Iddo, see also 2 Chronicles 9:29, 12:15; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 20; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:1; BT *Sanhedrin* 89b; Rashi and Radak on 1 Kings 13:1.

524. ***Who is YHVH that I should heed His voice?…*** The verse concludes: *to let Israel go? I do not know YHVH, nor will I let Israel go*. Despite this insulting statement, God did not punish Pharaoh immediately but rather later with the ten plagues. Rabbi Ḥiyya links Pharaoh's punishment with his insolence toward the Israelites and his refusing them (see Exodus 9:2).

Exodus 9:3 (announcing the plague of pestilence) concludes: *against the horses, against the donkeys, against*

the camels, against the cattle, and against the sheep—a very severe pestilence. Exodus 9:17 is followed by the plague of hail.

525. **Because it was engraved with miracles…** Rabbi Ḥiyya combines two midrashic motifs. According to one, Moses' staff was engraved with the initial letters of each of the ten plagues. According to another, it was engraved with the divine name *YHVH*.

On the first motif, see *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 9; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 8; *Shemot Rabbah* 8:3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 40. On the second, see above, note 118.

526. **At first, a snake…** Initially, at the burning bush, Moses' staff turned into a snake (Exodus 4:3). The snake often symbolizes the demonic realm, but here it apparently represents divine Judgment. The rock apparently symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who executes Judgment. Now, as he was commanded to strike the rock with his staff, Moses understood the interplay of the snake and the rock.

See *ZḤ* 30b–c (*MhN*). Cf. Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 93b. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *MmD*. On the relation between the snake and *Shekhinah*, cf. above, p. 266 and n. 236. On an engraving of a snake, see *Zohar* 1:173a; 2:107a. Cf. M *Avodah Zarah* 3:3.

The verse in Exodus continues: *and water will come out of it and the people will drink*. The verse in Deuteronomy concludes: *for all His ways are justice. A steadfast God without wrong, just and upright is He*.

527. **If Scripture had fallen silent…** Rabbi Ḥiyya had suggested that *rock* symbolizes *Shekhinah*. Rabbi Yehudah is apparently bothered by the fact that the verse speaks of Moses striking the rock—or, that the rock (symbolizing *Shekhinah*, characterized by Judgment) *will yield… water* (symbolizing Love). Rabbi Ḥiyya explains that each of God's names (or *sefirot*) generates whatever the world needs.

For various interpretations, see *OY*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; Galante; *MmD*. The biblical quotation here

conflates Exodus 17:6 and Numbers 20:8.

528. ***He struck the rock…*** This verse states that God Himself, not Moses, *struck the rock*. Why would anyone strike his own name? Why would God strike His own name —that is, *Shekhinah*.

529. **A potent hammer…** A mighty hammer is recognized by the effects of its pounding—that is, a great scholar is recognized by his wise remarks.

In rabbinic literature Rabbi Yoḥanan son of Zakkai is called "Mighty Hammer." See BT *Berakhot* 28b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 25.

"Potent" renders חריפא (*ḥarifa*), "sharp, of full strength, clever." For various interpretations of this aphorism, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *NO*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

530. ***rock* is *Gevurah*…** Above (at note 526), it seemed that *rock* symbolized *Shekhinah*. Here, Rabbi Ḥiyya associates *rock* with *Gevurah*. However, *Gevurah* is also known as *Din* (Judgment), which appears through *Shekhinah*, who is characterized by Judgment. On *rock* as *Gevurah*, see *Zohar* 3:210b.

The simple meaning of the verse in Psalms is הכה צור (*hikkah tsur*), *He struck the rock*, but Rabbi Ḥiyya reads this as *the rock struck*. "Smiting where necessary" may refer to *Gevurah* striking *Shekhinah* (stimulating the flow of water), or to striking and removing demonic forces that block the flow.

531. **תשי (*teshi*), *you neglected*…weakened…** The word תשי (*teshi*) derives from the root נשה (*nshh*), "to forget." According to a midrashic reading, however, the word means "you weakened," based on the root תשש (*tshsh*), "to be weak."

See *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:33: "Rabbi Azariah said in the name of Rabbi Yehudah son of Rabbi Simon, 'When Israel enact the will of the Omnipresent, they strengthen heavenly power, as is said: *In God we generate strength* (Psalms 60:14). When Israel do not enact the will of the Omnipresent, they weaken, as it were, the great power of

the One above, as is written: *The Rock that bore you, you weakened* (Deuteronomy 32:18).'"

Rabbi Ḥiyya had indicated that *rock* symbolizes *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment). Rabbi Yehudah wonders how this fits in with the midrashic reading of the verse in Deuteronomy, since it would seem that Israel's misdeeds in fact strengthen and arouse divine Judgment rather than weakening it.

On "weakening God," see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 319; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:12; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 25:1; *Zohar* 1:57b, 234b; above, p. 138 and n. 8; below at note 555.

532. **Certainly so...** Rabbi Ḥiyya accepts the midrashic reading *you weakened*, but he understands this to mean that the wicked perceive divine Judgment as weak, so they sin brazenly.

533. **There is a rock...** There are actually two rocks. One is *Binah*, Supernal Rock, Supernal Mother, who gives birth to *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel) or to the souls of Israel. From Her also emerges another rock, namely *Gevurah*, also known as *Din* (Judgment). The plural גבורות (*gevurot*) alludes to both *Binah* and *Gevurah*; for even though *Binah* is not *Din*, this quality issues from Her.

See above, note 530; *Zohar* 3:44a. On Judgment issuing from *Binah*, see *Zohar* 1:151a; 3:10b, 15b, 39b, 99a, 118b, 262b. On the plural, *gevurot*, cf. *Zohar* 1:249a; 2:83a.

534. **radiance of Father...** *Ḥesed*, which shines forth from *Ḥokhmah*, Supernal Father. Rabbi Abba may be reading the verse: *You forgot* אל (*El*), *the God of, the one who birthed you*—that is, *You forgot Ḥesed* [who is known as *El* and who issues from] *the one who birthed you* [namely, your divine father, *Ḥokhmah*].

535. **Water is well known...** Water symbolizes *Ḥesed*, which is also known as *Gedullah* (Greatness). Yet here God brought forth water from a *rock*, which symbolizes *Din* (Judgment)—or *Binah* (Supernal Rock), the source of *Din*. The wording of the verse in Psalms indicates this miraculous

transformation: *who turned the rock into a pool of water*. The water issued through *Shekhinah*, who is known as *boulder*, mentioned in the parallel miracle story in Numbers.

536. ***The Rock, His action is perfect…*** The quality of Judgment (symbolized by *the Rock*) was transformed into *Ḥesed*, symbolized by *water* and associated with Abraham, who is known as *perfect*—as in the verse in Genesis.

The verse in Genesis reads in full: *When Abram was ninety-nine years old, YHVH appeared to Abram and said to him, 'I am El Shaddai. Walk in My presence and be* תמים (*tamim*), *perfect* [or: *complete, blameless, wholehearted, unblemished*].'

537. **this time… second time…** In this episode in Exodus, the *rock* (symbolizing *Din*) turned *perfect* (symbolizing *Ḥesed*). In the later counterpart in Numbers 20, Moses was told to speak to the rock, but he struck it; he was then punished by not being allowed to bring the Israelites into the land of Canaan. Due to Israel's guilt, the rock did not turn *perfect*, as it had before; rather, they *weakened* the *rock* so that it generated Judgment.

The verse in Deuteronomy reads: *The Rock* ילדך (*yeladekha*), *that bore you*, תשי (*teshi*), *you neglected*. Rabbi Shim'on understands this as *The Rock* ילדך (*yeladekha*), *of your youth* [i.e., that you experienced as *Ḥesed* in your youth, soon after the Exodus], תשי (*teshi*), *you weakened* [causing it to generate Judgment later on]. See above, note 531.

538. **were the Israelites stupid…** Having experienced God's redemptive power and His loving care, how could they doubt that He was among them? After all, at the Red Sea even a maidservant witnessed more than Ezekiel would one day see, when he gazed upon the divine chariot-throne whirling through the heavens.

On the apparent stupidity of Israel's question, see *Pesiqta Rabbati* 13. On the clouds of glory, see above, note

68. On the tradition about “a maidservant at the sea,” see above, note 324.

539. **They wanted to discern…** Israel did not doubt God’s presence among them. Rather, they sought to determine which divine quality was manifesting itself at this moment: the highest *sefirah, Keter*—known as the Ancient One or *Ayin* (Nothingness)—or the configuration of *sefirot* surrounding *Tif’eret* (known as the Short-Tempered One and designated by the name *YHVH*). If their question had been less spiritual and more mundane, they would have used the ordinary word לֹא (*lo*), “no, not” (as in the divine statement in Exodus 16), rather than the term אַיִן (*ayin*), *Nothingness*.

Keter is known as *Ayin* (Nothingness or no-thingness) because it is beyond comprehension. See Matt, *“Ayin.”* On the name Short-Tempered One, see above, note 470. On the reading *Is YHVH among us or Ayin?* see *Zohar* 3:129a (*IR*), 158b; Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 93b; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 17:7.

The verse in Exodus 16 reads: *The people shall go out and gather each day’s share on its day so that I may test them whether they will follow My teaching or not.*

540. **why were they punished?…** Since their question was spiritual. Because, Rabbi Shim’on explains, they committed the sin of mentally separating the *sefirot* and regarding them as distinct entities, rather than uniting them through contemplation. Furthermore, the Israelites tested God. Consequently, they were punished, as indicated by the very next verse: *Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim*.

On Israel’s separating the *sefirot*, see Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Tsedeq*, 34a (and Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 141); Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 17:7. Cf. the explanation of Adam’s sin in Vol. 1, p. 298, n. 1438. On Israel’s testing God, see Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 93b. On the link between Israel’s question and the attack of Amalek, see *Midrash Tanna’im*, Deuteronomy 25:18; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3:9; *Pirqei de-*

Rabbi Eli'ezer 44; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 16; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:20; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 12–13; *Shemot Rabbah* 26:2; below at note 544.

Exodus 17:7 reads in full: *He called the name of the place Massah ("Testing") and Meribah ("Quarreling"), for the quarrel of the Children of Israel, and for their testing YHVH, saying, "Is YHVH among us or not?"*

541. ***Happy are you who sow* על (*al*), *by, all waters...*** In this verse (as in Exodus 15:27), the simple meaning of *al* is *by*, but Rabbi Yose interprets it hyperliterally as *over, above*. Many waters (both holy and unholy) issue directly and indirectly from the cosmic tree. Israel—situated in the trunk of this tree—draw their spiritual seed from *above* all these waters, and exercise their rule *over* all these waters, including the demonic forces known as *raging waters*.

Rabbi Yose identifies the *waters* with branches of the tree, which correspond to the seventy heavenly princes of the nations of the world. On the cosmic tree (and its connection with *Elim*), its branches and boundaries, and the four winds (or sides, directions) of the world, see above, notes 399–402, 495.

On the verse in Isaiah, see above, pp. 15–17. The full verse in Psalms reads: *Then over us would have swept the raging waters*. See *Zohar* 1:63b. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:507–8.

542. ***Who let loose... who drive away...*** In this verse the idiomatic sense of משלחי (*meshalleḥei*) is *who let loose* (*the feet*), letting these animals range freely, but Rabbi Yose insists on the hyperliteral meaning, *who drive away*. Ideally, Israel expels the two demonic powers ("crowns of the left"), symbolized by *ox* and *donkey*. See above, p. 17 and n. 68.

On *ox* and *donkey* as symbolizing respectively Edom (Christianity) and Ishmael (Islam), see *TZ*, add., 10, 147b; Galante; Scholem; *MmD*; Kimelman, *Lekhah Dodi*, 109, n. 144; 118, n. 178.

When Jacob said to Esau *I have acquired ox and donkey*, he was referring to what he learned during his many years of serving Laban, who was a mighty sorcerer. On Laban's expertise in witchcraft, see Genesis 30:27; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and *Sekhel Tov*, ad loc.; *Zohar* 1:133b, 139b, 158b, 161a, 164b, 166b–167a.

The verse in Deuteronomy is usually understood to mean *My father was* אובד (*oved*), a *wandering* [or: *fugitive, straying*] *Aramean*. The creative reading here—*An Aramean was oved, destroying, my father*—appears in the Passover Haggadah, and in *Targum Onqelos, Targum Yerushalmi*, ad loc. See *Zohar* 1:166b.

543. **When they couple as one…** If the two demonic powers known as *ox* and *donkey* join forces, the world cannot endure them. The command in Deuteronomy against plowing with these two species is understood as a warning not to stimulate the union of the two dangerous forces. See *Zohar* 1:166b, 172b; 2:6a; 3:86b, 207a.

If *ox* and *donkey* symbolize Christianity and Islam, then the danger of their joining together refers to the threat of a Christian-Islamic alliance. See the preceding note; Kimelman, *Lekhah Dodi*, 109, n.144.

On the principle of an action below arousing holy or demonic forces above, see *Zohar* 1:35a, 77b–78a, 82b, 86b, 88a, 156b, 164a–b, 233a, 235a, 244a; 2:31b, 35b, 265a; 3:31b, 40b, 47b, 92a–b, 105a, 110b, 112b, 113b, 145a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 144.

544. **From between their sides…** These two demonic forces (apparently *ox* on the left, *donkey* on the right) generate an even more impudent one, known as 'dog.' When Israel asked insolently *Is YHVH among us or not?* God punished them by inciting against them Amalek, whose impudence derives from the demonic dog.

On the sides of the *ox* and the *donkey*, see Ezekiel 1:10; *Zohar* 2:27a, 237a; 3:180b, 207a; *ZḤ* 99b–c (*TZ*); Kimelman, *Lekhah Dodi*, 118, n. 178.

On the dog as the most impudent animal, see *Shemot Rabbah* 42:9. Cf. *Zohar* 2:121b. The context of the verse in Exodus 11 is the tenth plague, the killing of the Egyptian firstborn, when the Israelites were not even menaced by a dog. The verse reads: *No dog* יחרץ (*yeḥerats*), *will sharpen* [or: *point, whet, move*], *its tongue*—i.e., threaten or snarl. Cf. Joshua 10:21. Rabbi Abba quotes this here to demonstrate that a dog snarls impudently.

On Amalek as a dog (and its attack on Israel as a punishment for their doubting God's presence), see *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 4; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 12; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3:9; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 44. Cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 26:2.

545. ***First of nations, Amalek…*** The verse reads: *First of nations, Amalek, and his end unto destruction*.

The verse in Exodus 15 concludes: *writhing seized the dwellers of Philistia*. The verse in Exodus 17 reads: *Wiping out, I will wipe out* [or: *I will surely wipe out*] *the memory of Amalek from under the heavens*.

The context in Deuteronomy (25:17–19) reads: *Remember what Amalek did to you on the way when you came out of Egypt, how he came upon you on the way and cut down all your stragglers, with you exhausted and weary, and he did not fear God…. You shall wipe out the memory of Amalek from under the heavens; you shall not forget*. On *he did not fear God*, see Rashi on Deuteronomy 25:18; *NO*. Cf. *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Beshallaḥ*) 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 17:8; below at note 577.

546. **Even though *the Rock…*** Although the divine attribute of Judgment (symbolized by *the Rock*) was transformed into Love and brought forth water for the Israelites, it still retained its own severe quality and punished Israel's lack of faith by inciting Amalek against them.

On *the Rock, His action is perfect*, see above at note 536.

547. ***There is a sickening evil…*** In this verse חולה (*ḥolah*), "sick," means "grievous, grave, painful," but Rabbi Abba understands it as "sickening."

548. **From the side of the left…** From the residue of the attribute of *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment), situated on the left side, issue malevolent forces. In preparation for attacking humans, they absorb evil energy in the chasm of the great abyss—the demonic abode.

On the demonic forces issuing from the left side, see *Zohar* 3:15b, 293a (*IZ*).

Rabbi Abba interprets the word תאונה (*te'unneh*), *will befall*, in the sense of תואנה (*to'anah*), "pretext, occasion, ploy." "Ploy" renders תסקופא (*tasqofa*). See *Targum Yonatan*, Judges 14:4, where תוסקפא (*tusqafa*) renders תאנה (*to'anah*), *pretext*. See *Targum Onqelos*, Deuteronomy 22:14; Radak on Judges 14:4; *Zohar* 1:169b, 179b; 3:172, 266b; *ZḤ* 18d (*MhN*); below, note 553.

"Wardens of judgment" renders גרדיני נימוסין (*gardinei nimusin*). *Gardinei* derives from the Castilian *guardián* (guardian). See Corominas, *Diccionario*, 3:246–48.

549. **why is it *sickening*?…** When the evil power overcomes a person, it turns him into a miser who refuses to contribute anything to the poor and cannot even spend money on himself—like a sick person who cannot enjoy food or drink.

The phrase "to preserve it for another" is clarified below. "Slaps his hand" can also be rendered idiomatically as "restrains, hinders, prevents (or inhibits) him."

550. ***A man to whom God grants wealth…*** Rabbi Abba points to an apparent contradiction in the verse: this wealth has been granted to the person by God, and yet *God does not give him the power to enjoy it*—implying that it is not really his.

The full verse reads: *A man to whom God grants wealth, property, and honor, so that he lacks nothing his heart could desire; but God does not give him the power to enjoy it—*

instead, a stranger enjoys it. This is futility and an evil sickness [or: *a sore affliction*]. Rabbi Abba ends the verse a bit differently, with wording from Ecclesiastes 5:15: *This too is a sickening evil*. Cf. *Zohar* 3:155b–156a.

551. **if it were written *God does not allow him to enjoy it*...** This wording would indicate that the wealth is not really his. However, *God does not give him the power* implies that He does not enable this person to "overpower" evil because he has let himself be seduced and now clings to it.

552. ***for his evil*...** The full verse reads: *There is a sickening evil I have seen under the sun: wealth* שמור (*shamur*), *hoarded, by its owner* לרעתו (*le-ra'ato*), *to his misfortune*. Rabbi Abba understands the second half of the verse as *wealth shamur, preserved, for its owner le-ra'ato, because of his evil*. He interprets this in the context of the other verse from Ecclesiastes: *God does not give him the power to enjoy it—instead, a stranger enjoys it*. This *stranger* ("the other one") now inherits the wealth, which was *preserved for* [him], *its* [new] *owner, because of* [the original owner's clinging to] *his evil*.

553. **one who dwells in fine accommodations...** His gross ingratitude condemns him to continual dissatisfaction.

"False accusations" renders תסקופי מלין (*tasquppei millin*), a phrase deriving from *Targum Onqelos*, Deuteronomy 22:14, rendering עלילות דברים (*alilot devarim*), *false accusation* (of sexual misconduct made by a husband against his wife). "Capricious" renders the singular form תסקופא (*tasqofa*), "false statement, pretext, ploy." See above, note 548.

554. **Similarly, with Israel...** Despite God's redeeming them from Egypt and His constant care, they complained bitterly, accusing Him of trying to kill them by thirst (Exodus 17:3) and asking insolently *Is YHVH among us or not*? As a result, God incited Amalek against them.

See *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 4; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 13; *Shemot Rabbah* 26:2; above at note

544. On God carrying Israel "on eagles' wings," see Exodus 19:4. On the clouds of glory, see above, note 68.

555. **He came from a decree of severe Judgment...** *Amalek came* and attacked Israel as punishment for their complaining and insolence. See the preceding note. Amalek's assault affected the sefirotic realm too, as explained below.

On the theme that every element of Torah contains secrets—even a simple word like *came*—see above, note 331. On Torah and the name of God, see above, note 429. On the effects of Israel's virtue and misconduct on God Himself, see above, note 531.

556. **coming to provoke Judgment against Compassion...** Israel's lack of faith and their insolence empowered Amalek. Not only did the enemy attack and punish Israel below; in the sefirotic realm, Judgment was stimulated to overwhelm *Israel* above—namely *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel), whose quality is Compassion.

According to rabbinic sources, the name *Rephidim* alludes to Israel's sin of slackening their hands from Torah and God's commands. See *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Beshallaḥ*) 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 17:8; BT *Sanhedrin* 106a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 25, *Yitro* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 3, 10; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 22; *Zohar* 2:12b. On "slackening of hands," see Jeremiah 47:3.

Here Rabbi Shim'on adds that Torah signifies God Himself, since it constitutes His name. See above, note 429.

557. **Twice Amalek waged war...** Once here, and again in the book of Numbers in the aftermath of the disastrous mission of the spies.

558. **Above and below...** Above, Judgment was stimulated and empowered in its struggle with Compassion. See above, note 556. Below, Amalek mutilated some of the Israelites by cutting off the covenantal sign of circumcision (or the phallus) and throwing it mockingly toward heaven.

On Amalek's violent act, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 25:18; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:64; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3:6, 11; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 9–10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 10, 14; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:3; below at note 595; *Zohar* 2:195a; 3:30b, 190a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 68. On the double battle with Amalek, see below; *Zohar* 2:194b–195a.

559. **first battle of the blessed Holy One** Following the Exodus. See Exodus 17:16: *War for YHVH against Amalek from generation to generation*. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 68.

560. **battle above… Israel above…** As a result of Israel's lack of faith and their insolence, not only was Amalek empowered on earth, but above in the sefirotic realm harsh Judgment nearly overwhelmed Compassion—the quality of *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel), namely "Israel above." Moses, who attained the rung of *Tif'eret*, had to focus on this battle.

See above, notes 363, 556; *Bahir* 92 (135), 94 (138); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 57, 68–69, 254–55. Cf. *Zohar* 2:194b–195a. The full verse in Exodus reads: *When Moses would raise his hand, Israel prevailed; when he would let down his hand, Amalek prevailed*. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *MmD*.

561. **is this battle of Amalek insignificant…** This was a cosmic battle, more fateful than any other in the history of the world, because the divine realm itself was affected—both by the sefirotic struggle (see the preceding note) and by Amalek's violent mockery of heaven (see above at note 558).

The final clause can also be construed as "but rather because it was launched against all aspects of the blessed Holy One." See *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *MmD*.

Gog and Magog are demonic powers who will wage eschatological war against the righteous and be defeated by God. The concept derives from Ezekiel 38:2.

562. **Why *to Joshua*…** In such a fateful war, why would Moses turn to a young novice? Because, Rabbi Shim'on explains, Moses saw that the prince of demons, Samael, was coming to bolster Amalek, and Joshua would be his fitting opponent (as clarified below).

The verse in Exodus 33 reads: *His attendant Joshua son of Nun*, נער (*na'ar*), *a youth* [or: *lad, servant*], *would not depart from within the Tent*. On the meaning of *na'ar* in this verse and Joshua's age at the time, see *Midrash Aggadah*, Exodus 24:5; Rashi on 1 Chronicles 22:5; Ibn Ezra on Genesis 37:21; Exodus 33:11 (long); Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 2:32; Radak on Joshua 6:23; Jeremiah 1:6; Zechariah 2:8; Naḥmanides on Exodus 33:11; Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*.

563. **Joshua at that time occupied a very high rung…** Joshua was not situated at the level of *Shekhinah*, since Moses occupied this rung, being the husband of *Elohim* (*Shekhinah*). However, Joshua was linked to *Shekhinah* from below, on the rung of Metatron, chief angel and prince of the world, who is constantly nourished by *Shekhinah* and is also known as נער (*na'ar*), "youth, lad, (heavenly) servant."

On Moses as husband of *Elohim* (*Shekhinah*), see above, p. 74, n. 17. On Joshua's status, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 69.

On Metatron as Youth, see BT *Yevamot* 16b: "Rabbi Shemu'el son of NaḤmani said in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan, 'This verse was uttered by the Prince of the World: *I have been a youth, I have also been old* (Psalms 37:25). Who said it? If you suggest it was the blessed Holy One, does old age pertain to Him? So David must have said it. But was he so old? Rather you must conclude that the Prince of the World uttered it.'"

See *Alfa Beita de-Rabbi Aqiva* A (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:354); *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:12; *Zohar* 1:95b, 124b–125a, 126a–b (*MhN*), 143a, 162a, 179b, 181b; 2:143a, 164a, 169b; *ZḤ* 85c (*MhN, Rut*); Vol. 3, p. 342, n. 222. On

Metatron, see *Tosafot, Yevamot* 16b, s.v. *pasuq zeh*; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 73–108; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 626–32; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 377–81.

564. ***Jerusalem… a tent not to be packed up…*** According to Rabbi Yehudah, the verse alludes to the heavenly Jerusalem, symbolizing *Shekhinah*. She accompanies Her people Israel in exile, but eventually Her (and their) exile will end and She will no longer have to be constantly on the move. Joshua maintained intimate contact with *Shekhinah*—not departing *from within the Tent*—imitating Metatron the Youth above.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 91, n. 79. The verse in Isaiah concludes: *whose pegs will never be pulled out, none of whose ropes will snap*. For the verse in Exodus, see above, note 562.

565. **this *youth* will confront him…** Joshua, associated with Metatron, will defeat Samael.

On the character of Joshua's warriors, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 44; *Tanḥuma, Shelaḥ* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shelaḥ* 5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 16:5.

566. **Youth above aroused…** Stimulated by Joshua, Metatron aroused, arrayed in weapons prepared by his Mother (*Shekhinah*) to avenge the violation of the covenant of circumcision perpetrated by Amalek.

Shekhinah is pictured as an avenging sword executing divine judgment, poised to attack anyone who betrays the covenant of circumcision. See *Zohar* 1:53b, 66a–b, 237a, 238b, 240b; 2:26a, 28b, 54a, 61a; 3:19b, 30b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 69, 213.

On Amalek's attack on the covenant of circumcision, see above at note 558. *Disabled* renders ויחלוש (*va-yaḥalosh*), "weakened, defeated."

567. ***Moses' hands were* כבדים (*kevedim*), *heavy… glorious…*** Understanding the adjective *kevedim* as related to the noun כבוד (*kavod*), "glory, splendor, honor."

The ten fingers of the hands correspond to the ten *sefirot*, whose power Moses aroused and harmonized. See above, notes 363, 560.

The full verse reads: *Moses' hands were* [or: *grew*] *heavy, so they took a stone and placed it beneath him and he sat upon it, while Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one from this side and one from that side, and his hands were steadfast till the sun came down*.

568. ***They took a stone…*** So that Moses would not sit comfortably but rather share in Israel's distress.

See *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Beshallaḥ*) 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 17:12; BT *Ta'anit* 11a; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 27; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 12.

569. ***his hands were*** אמונה **(*emunah*), *steadfast… faith…*** Interpreting *emunah* hyperliterally. Moses acted in wisdom, instructing Aaron (who symbolizes *Ḥesed*) to stand on his right, stimulating this divine quality, and Hur (who symbolizes *Gevurah*) to stand on his left, stimulating that divine quality. Moses symbolizes *Tif'eret*, which harmonizes right and left; thus the three of them together aroused and completed the sefirotic triad of *faith*, generating divine assistance.

Cf. Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29c; Naḥmanides on Exodus 17:12. On Aaron and Hur, see Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 57. On Hur as symbolizing *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment), see *Zohar* 2:223b; 3:181b. This linkage may be based on the association of חור (*ḥur*), Hur, with חרון (*ḥaron*), "(divine) wrath."

570. ***When Moses would raise his hand…*** By raising his right hand above the left, Moses empowered the divine right hand, *Ḥesed*, to overwhelm *Din* (harsh Judgment). Thereby, the divine quality of Compassion prevailed—namely "Israel above," *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel).

See above, notes 363, 556, 560. The full verse reads: *When Moses would raise his hand, Israel prevailed; when he would let down his hand, Amalek prevailed*.

571. **when Israel below waned from prayer…** Their sincere pleas and devotion were essential in order to empower Moses and ensure victory over the enemy. Similarly, prayer is a vital component of the Temple ritual. By offering a sacrifice, the priest becomes fully arrayed and capable of unifying the *sefirot*; yet Israel must accompany him with prayer.

During the Second Temple period, there was a system of twenty-four מעמדות (*ma'a-madot*), "stations, posts," consisting of Israelites who represented the entire community when the daily sacrifice was offered in the Temple. The country was divided into twenty-four districts, and delegations from each district served in weekly rotations. A token number of Israelites would come to Jerusalem and gather in the courtyard of the Temple, while the others back in their communities would gather to offer prayers. See M *Ta'anit* 4:2; *OY*; Galante.

On the effect of Israel's faith and devotion during the battle with Amalek, see M *Rosh ha-Shanah* 3:8; *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Beshallaḥ*) 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 17:11; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 27.

572. ויהי ידיו **(*Vayhi yadav*), *His hands was…*** In biblical Hebrew a singular verb sometimes appears with a plural subject, but here, according to the *Zohar*, the singular form *was* alludes to just the right hand, upon which all depends.

The Masoretic text reads ידיו (*yadav*), *his hands*, but here the *Zohar* maintains that the spelling is deficient: ידו (*ydv*), without the second י (*yod*), so it can be read יָדוֹ (*yado*), *his hand*.

On the singular form *vayhi, was*, see *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Beshallaḥ*) 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 17:12; *Leqaḥ Tov* and *Sekhel Tov*, Exodus 17:12.

On the notion that "all depends on the right," see *Zohar* 2:52b, 57a–b, 223a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254; Wolfson, "Left Contained in the Right."

On the full and defective spelling of ידיו (*yadav*), *his hands*, see Recanati on Leviticus 9:22, 59c; *Ma'arekhet ha-Elohut* 13, 193b; *Minḥat Shai* on Exodus 17:12 (who relies on the printed version of the *Zohar* here, reading ידיו [*yadav*], *his hands*); Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 17:12, n. 96. Cf. above, note 363; and the singular form ידו (*yado*), *his hand*, in Exodus 17:11.

The verse in Exodus 15 concludes: *Your right hand, O YHVH, smashes the enemy*.

573. ויחלוש **(*Va-yaḥalosh*), *He disabled*...** Why doesn't the verse simply state *Joshua slew Amalek and his people by the edge of the sword*? Because here, the *Zohar* contends, *va-yaḥalosh* means *he cast lots*, based on the noun חלש (*ḥelesh*), "lot." Amalek brought other nations along with him (see below), so Joshua *cast lots* in order to determine who was an Amalekite—deserving death for having violated the covenant. Then, *Shekhinah*, the avenging sword, slew them.

For the word *ḥelesh*, see M *Shabbat* 23:2. On *yaḥalosh*, see above, end of note 566. On *yaḥalosh* in Exodus as *he cast lots*, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 4. On חולש (*ḥolesh*) in Isaiah as *casting lots*, see BT *Shabbat* 149b; *OY*; Vital; Ben Yehuda, *Dictionary*, s.v. *ḥlsh*, 1604–5, n. 2.

On Amalek's violation of the covenant, see above at note 558, and note 566. On *Shekhinah* as the avenging sword, see above, note 566. The verse in Exodus 17 reads: *Wiping out, I will wipe out* [or: *I will surely wipe out*] *the memory of Amalek from under the heavens*.

574. ***this*, precisely** *Shekhinah*, the Divine Presence who is constantly right here. She slew the Amalekites.

On *Shekhinah* as *zot*, see above, note 194; p. 170, n. 108.

575. **destined to slay other kings** The thirty-one kings of Canaan.

576. ***wiping out*, above; *I will wipe out*, below** The verse reads מחה אמחה (*maḥoh emḥeh*), *Wiping out, I will wipe out* [or: *I will surely wipe out*]. The doubling of the verb

alludes to the elimination of both the heavenly prince (or demonic root) of Amalek above and the earthly nation below.

On the doubling of the verb, see *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Beshallaḥ*) 2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 17:14; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:66; above, p. 194, n. 190. On the heavenly princes, see above, p. 19, n. 71. On defeating a nation's heavenly prince, see above, note 80.

577. ***Wiping out, I will wipe out… You shall wipe out…*** Rabbi Yitsḥak wonders who will perform this act: God or Israel? He explains that they will cooperate.

On this cooperation, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3:15; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 17; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 12; above, p. 194 at n. 190.

578. **Amalek brought other nations…** After Amalek convinced these nations to fight (or after the battle), Joshua הוה חולש (*havah ḥolesh*), "cast lots," to determine who was really an Amalekite, deserving of death. According to Rabbi Yose, this is the meaning of the verb ויחלוש (*va-yaḥalosh*): *he cast lots*. See above, note 573.

On Amalek's attempt to form an international alliance against Israel, see *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Beshallaḥ*) 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 17:8.

579. ויחלוש **(*Va-yaḥalosh*), *He disabled…*** Rabbi Yeisa maintains the simple meaning of the verb, but explains that Joshua defeated Amalek's heavenly prince, Samael, thereby disabling the enemy below.

See above at notes 562–65. On the heavenly princes, see above, note 576.

580. ***altar*—corresponding to the one above…** The altar built by Moses symbolizes *Shekhinah*. He called it *YHVH* נסי (*Nissi*), *My Banner*, because *Shekhinah* wreaked vengeance upon Amalek for their violent act against the covenantal "sign" of circumcision (see above, note 558). From then on, *Shekhinah* also became known as *avenging sword*.

On *Shekhinah* as *altar*, see *Zohar* 1:173b; 3:24b, 30b. On *Shekhinah* as sword, see above, note 566. The verse in Leviticus reads: *I will bring against you a sword avenging with vengeance of the covenant*.

581. **to atone for them** Apparently, to atone for Israel's lack of faith and their insolent question: *Is YHVH among us or not?* (Exodus 17:7).

See above, notes 544, 554. Cf. the following paragraph. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital (in *MM*); Galante; *MmD*.

582. **The name of that altar…** According to Rabbi Ḥiyya, the name *YHVH My Banner* refers to the altar associated with the ritual of circumcision. He links נסי (*Nissi*), *My Banner*, with נסהו (*nissahu*), [*There He set him statute and law, and there*] *He tested him*, which alludes to God's command at Marah that the Israelites complete the ritual of circumcision. Thus these two words—*nissi* and *nissahu*—constitute "one matter."

Although they had undergone circumcision in Egypt (see above, p. 161, n. 74), the Israelites had not completed the act, which involves two steps. First the foreskin is cut and removed, disclosing the mucous membrane, which is then torn down the center and pulled back, revealing the corona. The act of tearing and pulling back the membrane is called פריעה (*peri'ah*), "uncovering" the corona, which reveals the holy letter י (*yod*). See above, note 433.

The ritual of circumcision is seen as a sacrificial offering, atoning for the father's sins. See *Zohar* 1:93a, 94b–95a; 2:255b; 3:44a (*Piq*), 164a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 55 (68). Cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:10; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:10; *Shemot Rabbah* 19:5; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10. According to some biblical scholars, circumcision originated as a substitute for child sacrifice. See Exodus 22:28–29; Leviticus 12:2–5; 22:27; Wolfson, *Circle in the Square*, 32–33.

The altar built by Jacob (and assigned a divine name) symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is known as *God, God of Israel*. See above, note 580. The verse in Genesis reads: *He set up an altar there and called it God, God of Israel*. For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

583. **Whoever gazes at a rainbow…** According to Rabbi Yose, the verse in Exodus actually refers to a vision of the rainbow, whose colors convey the hidden sefirotic spectrum of *Shekhinah*.

See BT *Ḥagigah* 16a: "'Whoever shows no concern for the honor [or: glory] of his Maker, it were better for him if he had not come into the world' (M *Ḥagigah* 2:1). What does this mean? Rabbi Abba said: 'It refers to one who gazes at the rainbow,'… for it is written: *Like the appearance of the bow in the cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the radiance all around—the appearance of the semblance of the glory of YHVH* (Ezekiel 1:28)." See *Zohar* 1:1b, 71b, 72b, 117a, 232a; 2:99a; 3:84a; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 336–40.

Similarly, it is forbidden to gaze at the fingers of the priests when they bless the people because *Shekhinah* rests upon their hands. See JT *Megillah* 4:7, 75c; BT *Ḥagigah* 16a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:8; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:9; *Zohar* 3:84a, 147a.

The verse in Exodus describes a vision experienced by Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders of Israel. It reads in full: *They saw the God of Israel, and beneath His feet was like a fashioning of sapphire pavement and like the essence of heaven for purity*.

584. **a rainbow, unspecified… above… below…** The nonspecific wording alludes to both the rainbow above—conveying the colors of *Shekhinah*—and the rainbow below, the sign of circumcision on the human phallus (which symbolizes *Yesod*, the divine phallus).

On קשת (*qeshet*), "bow, rainbow," as a euphemism for "phallus," see *Bereshit Rabbah* 87:7; BT *Sotah* 36b, *Sanhedrin* 92a; *Zohar* 1:71b, 247a; 3:66b. Cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 15a, in the name of Shemu'el: "Any emission of semen that does not shoot forth like an arrow does not fructify." On not looking at one's sign of circumcision, see BT *Shabbat* 118b.

585. ***Place your hand under my thigh…*** If it is forbidden to look at the sign of circumcision, how could Abraham ask his servant to swear by this sign?

The context in Genesis (24:2–4) reads: *Abraham said to his servant, elder of his household, who ruled over all that was his, "Place your hand under my thigh, and I will have you swear by YHVH, God of heaven and God of earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanite in whose midst I dwell. Rather, to my land and to my kindred you shall go, and shall take a wife for my son, for Isaac."* See *Zohar* 1:181b.

The same wording appears in Genesis 47:29 (recording Jacob's request to Joseph): *If I have found favor in your eyes, place your hand under my thigh and act toward me with steadfast kindness—please do not bury me in Egypt*. See *Zohar* 1:222b.

586. ***the God of Israel…*את אלהי (*et Elohei*), *the God of, Israel…*** Grammatically, the word את (*et*) is almost always an accusative particle with no ascertainable independent sense, but Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that when et appears in a biblical verse, it amplifies the simple meaning. Here, as often in the *Zohar*, את (*et*) alludes to *Shekhinah*, who comprises the totality of divine speech, the entire alphabet from א (*alef*) to ת (*tav*).

According to Rabbi Abba, if this phrase did not include the word et and read simply אלהי ישראל (*Elohei Yisra'el*), *the God of Israel*, it would refer to another sefirotic potency—perhaps *Binah*, who is pictured as *the God of Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel). See *Zohar* 2:242a.

On *et*, see BT *Pesaḥim* 22b, *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Zohar* 1:247a; 2:81b. “Keys” renders קלדיטין (*qalditin*), based on the rabbinic term אקלידא (*aqlida*), which derives from Greek *kleida*, “key.” These keys unlock treasures of emanation. See *Zohar* 2:5a–b (*MhN*), 14a (*MhN*); *ZḤ* 12b (*MhN*).

587. **Light of the lamp of *Shekhinah*…** Rabbi Yose contends that this was not a vision of *Shekhinah*, but rather of Her effulgence, Metatron, who is known as נער (*na’ar*), “youth, lad, servant.” According to this view, the wording *the God of Israel* refers to *Shekhinah* Herself, while the particle et alludes specifically to Metatron.

On Metatron as Youth, see above, note 563. On Metatron’s role in the Temple (or Tabernacle), see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:12; *Zohar* 2:159a.

588. **A certain woman gave birth…** Pharaoh had commanded that all male Israelite children be put to death. One Israelite woman gave birth to a boy, and as Pharaoh’s officers came to seize the baby, she inserted him into one of the bricks fashioned by the Israelites. At that moment, a heavenly hand appeared, grasped the brick, and inlaid it at the foot of the divine throne—as a sign that God shared in Israel’s suffering. When the Temple was destroyed, God disregarded this reminder of His people.

See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 24:10; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 48 (which identifies the woman as Rachel granddaughter of Shutelah from the tribe of Ephraim). Cf. *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14; *Sifrei*, Numbers 84; JT *Sukkah* 4:5, 54c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:8; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beshallaḥ* 11. On “the palm of a hand,” see Daniel 5:5; BT *Ta’anit* 25a, 29a; *Midrash Tehillim* 92:8.

For the full verse in Exodus, see above, note 583.

589. ***Sapphire pavement*… seventy-two directions…** The seventy-two directions apparently allude to seventy-two angelic powers surrounding *Shekhinah*.

On the heavenly palace known as *sapphire pavement* (linked with *Yesod*), see *Zohar* 1:41b, 45a; 2:258a (all *Heikh*).

On the keys, see above, end of note 586. On the number seventy-two, see above, p. 16, n. 65; p. 154 at n. 56; and note 216.

590. **Just as *the essence of heaven*...** Apparently, just as *Tif'eret* (known as *heaven*) is engraved with seventy-two angelic powers, so is *Shekhinah* (known as "appearance of *essence of heaven*") endowed with seventy-two powers.

On the heavenly palace known as *essence of heaven* (actually linked with *Hod*), see *Zohar* 1:42a; 2:246b–247a (all *Heikh*). For various interpretations, see *OY*; *Galante*; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

591. **radiance... engraved from the aspect of *Shekhinah*** Apparently, the radiance of Metatron, issuing from *Shekhinah*.

See above, note 587. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital (in *MM*); Galante; *MmD*.

592. **there are sixty surrounding *Shekhinah*...** Rather than seventy-two. How can this discrepancy be explained?

The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Behold the bed of Solomon! Sixty warriors surrounding her, of the warriors of Israel*. See above, p. 125, n. 205; notes 129, 200.

593. **sixty plus the radiance of twelve boundaries...** The sixty angels surrounding *Shekhinah* are augmented by twelve boundaries of the sefirotic tree, totaling seventy-two. All of these illumine *Shekhinah* (known as *Matronita*) when She unites with King *Tif'eret*; thus She receives *the essence of Tif'eret*, who is known as *heaven*. The two partners share this radiance.

On the balanced boundaries of the tree, see above, notes 399, 495, and at note 541. On *Matronita* as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 197.

594. **'sixty lashes of fire'...** In BT *Ḥagigah* 15a, Metatron is lashed with sixty strokes of fire to demonstrate that he is subservient to God. Here, these lashes represent powers of harsh Judgment issuing from *Shekhinah* and enveloping Metatron the Youth.

See BT *Yoma* 77a, *Bava Metsi'a* 85b; *Zohar* 1:223b; 2:51b; 3:60a, 170b.

595. ***called its name*** **יהוה נסי (*YHVH Nissi*), *YHVH* *My Banner…*** This name alludes to the ritual of circumcision. In Egypt the Israelites had undergone the first stage of circumcision (cutting and removing the foreskin), but not the second: פריעה (*peri'ah*), "uncovering" the corona. At Marah, God commanded the Israelites to complete the ritual. Here, apparently, Amalek seized all those who failed to do so and mutilated them by cutting off the initial sign of circumcision (or the phallus) and throwing it mockingly toward heaven.

See above, p. 357 and n. 558; notes 433, 580, 582.

596. ***hand upon Yah's throne…*** God takes a vow by placing His hand on the divine throne.

Both words in the phrase מדר דר (*mi-dor dor*), *from generation to generation*, are written without the letter ו (*vav*). This deficient spelling alludes to a moral deficiency: every generation is contaminated by a trace of the evil seed of Amalek, which God vows to eliminate.

According to a midrashic interpretation, God's throne is incomplete as long as Amalek's seed survives in the world. See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3:15; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 18; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 12; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:10

597. **From דיורא (*diyyura*), habitation…** Rabbi Yitsḥak associates דר (*dor*), *generation*, with דיורא (*diyyura*), "habitation." Amalek's power and memory will be doubly eliminated: from earth and from heaven, in this world and in the world that is coming.

See *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Beshallaḥ*) 2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 17:16; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 17:16; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3:15; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 18. On Amalek's influence above, see notes 556, 558. On the double elimination of Amalek, see above, notes 576–77.

1. **[Rabbi El’azar opened,]** Various manuscripts (N38, N47, O2, O17, R1) and the Cremona edition include no name here and begin simply with the verse from Leviticus. M5, *OY*, and the Mantua edition read “Rabbi Ḥizkiyah opened, saying.” *MM, NO*, and Elijah ben Solomon, the Vilna Gaon (*Yahel Or*), propose reading “Rabbi El’azar…,” based on the response below (at note 23) by his father, Rabbi Shim’on. See Galante (*OY*, 81b); *NZ*; *MmD*.

2. **ידיו (*yadav*), *his hands*—spelled ידו (*yado*), *his hand*…** In this verse the word יָדָיו (*yadav*), *his hands*, is spelled without a second י (*yod*) and can therefore be read as יָדוֹ (*yado*), *his hand*, implying that when a person raises his hands in prayer or blessing, the right hand (symbolizing the divine right hand, *Ḥesed*) should be higher than the left (symbolizing the divine left hand, *Din*), thereby empowering *Ḥesed* over *Din*.

The verse in Leviticus reads: *Aaron raised his hands toward the people and blessed them*. On the peculiar spelling of יָדָיו (*yadav*), *his hands*, see Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29b–c; idem, *Sha’ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 2:57a; 3:92b, 146a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254; *Minḥat Shai* on the verse. Cf. above, p. 362, n. 572.

On raising the right hand higher than the left, see Todros Abulafia, *Sha’ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 2:225a; 3:92b, 145a (*Piq*), 146a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254.

3. **Book of King Solomon** One of the many volumes housed in the real or imaginary library of the authors of the *Zohar*.

For other references to this book, see *Zohar* 1:7b, 13b, 225b; 2:70a (*RR*), 125a, 139a, 172a, 204b; 3:10b, 65b, 70b, 104a, 151b, 164a, 193b; *ZḤ* 12b (*MhN*). Naḥmanides several times refers to, and quotes from, an Aramaic version of the Apocryphal *Wisdom of Solomon*. See the introduction to his Commentary on the Torah, 5–6; idem, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:163, 182.

See Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 25; and the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, on *Zohar* 1:7a: "All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*… have been lost in the wanderings of exile…. Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*." For a catalogue of these books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*.

4. **whoever raises his hands above, not in prayer…** One who raises his hands with no holy purpose or intent is cursed by ten heavenly powers who inhabit *Shekhinah* (known as *a city*). When human hands are raised and spread in prayer, these powers fortify that prayer and convey it above, glorifying *Shekhinah* (known also as Holy Name), who is then blessed with a flow of emanation.

The ten powers correspond to the ten human fingers, which also symbolize the ten *sefirot*. On the fingers, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:3; *Midrash Tadshe* 10 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:174); *Bahir* 87 (124), 94 (138); Naḥmanides on Exodus 17:12; 30:19; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29b–c; idem, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 1:20b–21a; 2:57a, 75b–77a, 208a; 3:143a (*IR*), 145a (*Piq*), 186a–b, and especially 195b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254. On the verse in Ecclesiastes, see *Zohar* 2:156b.

5. **blessing the one who blesses Him…** The human blessing God is himself blessed.

The verse in Numbers describes the priestly blessing, traditionally recited with hands spread. It reads in full: *They shall set My name upon the Children of Israel, and I Myself will bless them*. According to the simple sense of the verse, the closing word, *them*, refers to the Israelites, but midrashically it is applied to the blessing priests, who are themselves blessed.

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 39, 43; BT *Sotah* 38b, *Ḥullin* 49a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:8; *Zohar* 1:199b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 255.

6. **248 curses…** Inflicting all 248 limbs of his body. On the concept of "248 limbs" (more precisely, joints or bones

covered with flesh and sinews), see M *Oholot* 1:8. The verse in Psalms concludes: *He took no delight in blessing, and it is far from him*.

7. **empty place…** If one's hands are raised in vain and emptiness, demonic powers fill the void.

On the incompatibility of blessing and an empty place, see BT *Sanhedrin* 92a: "Rabbi El'azar said, 'Whoever does not leave bread on his table [when reciting the Grace after Meals] will never see a sign of blessing.'" See Naḥmanides on Exodus 25:24; *Zohar* 1:88a, 240a, 250a; 2:63b, 87b–88a, 153b, 155a, 157b; 3:34a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 270.

"We translate: 'in prayer'" refers to *Targum Onqelos* on the verse in Genesis: "I raise my hand in prayer before *YHVH*." See *Zohar* 1:65a; 2:9a, 70a (*RR*), 268b; 3:195b, 258b, 287a.

8. **spreading of hands contains supernal mysteries…** Since the ten fingers symbolize the ten *sefirot* (see above, note 4), a person who raises and spreads his hands in blessing unifies the *sefirot* (also known as "utterances"). Consequently, *Shekhinah* (known as Holy Name) is blessed with emanation.

On the ten utterances, see M *Avot* 5:1, "The world was created through ten utterances." See above, p. 152, n. 52.

The inner and outer Chariots are, respectively, forces within and below the sefirotic realm. On the relation between these different forces and human fingers, see *Zohar* 1:20b–21a (Vol. 1, pp. 158–59, nn. 403–5); 2:208a–b.

9. **ולא יראו פני ריקם (*Ve-lo yera'u fanai reiqam*)…** The original form of the Hebrew was ולא יִרְאוּ פני ריקם (*Ve-lo yir'u fanai reiqam*), *They shall not see My face* [or: *presence*] *empty-handed*, but the Masoretes revocalized the verb as a passive—יֵרָאוּ (*yera'u*), *they shall* [*not*] *be seen* [or: *appear*]—in order to avoid the depiction of seeing God.

Here Rabbi El'azar reads the verse hyperliterally: פני ולא יראו (*Ve-lo yera'u fanai*), *My face shall not appear* [*in vain*],

implying that if one raises his fingers needlessly, he exposes the divine face (i.e., the *sefirot*) in vain.

On the relation between the fingers and the divine face, see the *Zohar* passages cited at the end of the preceding note.

10. **ten powers… ten utterances below…** The ten heavenly powers who preside over the raising of the ten fingers constitute "ten utterances below"—a decade within *Shekhinah*, corresponding to the *sefirot* above. When fingers are raised in prayer, through these powers they unite the entire holy realm, and demonic forces are subdued.

"The mystery of engraved letters" apparently refers to the ten letters of the fully spelled-out divine name *YHVH*: הא יוד הא ואו (*yod he vav he*). On the ten powers, see above, note 4.

11. **In mystery of the Holy Name… King and Priest…** In the sefirotic realm (symbolized by the name *YHVH*), *Binah* is King, reigning over all the lower *sefirot* and also known as Holy of Holies. The ministering Priest is *Ḥesed* (the first *sefirah* issuing from *Binah*), situated on the right side and also known as *Gedullah* (Greatness) and called גדול (*Gadol*), Great. *Ḥesed* is symbolized by the first day of Creation, on which the primordial light appeared.

On the sefirotic significance of the name *YHVH*, see above, p. 289, n. 325.

12. **King below… Beneath Him is Priest…** *Shekhinah*, also known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom), is the King below, reigning over all the lower worlds. Beneath this king is the archangel Michael on the right, serving as High Priest and offering the souls of the righteous.

On Michael as High Priest, see *Zohar* 2:159a; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 114–16. Cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 12b. On his offering the souls of the righteous, see *Araqim*, in *Otsar Midrashim*, ed. Eisenstein, 1:70a (cf. *Otsar Midrashim*, 1:104a; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 5:63); *Tosafot* on *Menaḥot* 110a, s.v. *u-Mikhael; Zohar* 1:80a (*ST*), 81a (*ST*);

2:247a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*), 24b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 137. Cf. *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:11.

13. **Other Side…king…** In the demonic realm, Satan is the *old and foolish king*.

The verse in Ecclesiastes reads: *Better a poor and wise child than an old and foolish king*. According to a midrashic interpretation, *an old and foolish king* refers to the aged evil impulse, who seeks to dominate human beings from the time they are born. The good impulse, in contrast, is a recent arrival—*a poor and wise child*—who enters the human being only at age thirteen. Here, Satan plays the role of king.

See *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 16; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:13; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:5; *Zohar* 1:78a–b (*ST*), 110b (*MhN*), 179a–b; 2:33b. On the link between foolishness and sin, see Numbers 12:11; BT *Sotah* 3a. On the identification of Satan with the evil impulse, see BT *Bava Batra* 16a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same."

14. ***priest of* און (*On*), *On*…** Beneath Satan serves another demonic power known as *priest of On*. In Genesis 41:45, this title designates Joseph's Egyptian father-in-law. Here, the foreign priest represents a demonic figure.

Rabbi El'azar relates the place-name און (*On*), *On*, to its homonym in Hosea, meaning "power, wealth," and perhaps also to און (*aven*), "disaster, sin, injustice, deception, nothingness; false, idolatrous cult." Ephraim represents the northern kingdom of Israel, whose first king Jeroboam built two golden calves—a sinful act deriving from the demonic power of the *priest of On*.

15. **When this king and this priest are subdued…** When the demonic powers are overcome and they acknowledge the one true God, then He rules alone.

16. ***old and foolish king*—namely, Pharaoh…** He acknowledged God by admitting (after the plague of hail): *This time I have sinned! YHVH is in the right, and I and my*

people are in the wrong (Exodus 9:27). Afterward, Jethro, who served under Pharaoh, came and acknowledged God (see below).

Rabbi El'azar links Jethro the priest with the demonic power known as *priest of On* (see above, note 14). Similarly, when Rachel saw that she was about to die in childbirth, she named her baby boy בן אוני (*Ben oni*), *Ben-oni*, "son of my vigor [or: sorrow]," understood here as alluding to the demonic realm of death, associated with On. Jacob quickly countered by naming him בן ימין (*Ben yamin*), *Benjamin*, "son of the right," the side of life.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *As her soul was departing—for she was dying—she named him Ben-oni, but his father called him Benjamin*. See *Zohar* 1:175a. On Jethro as an advisor to Pharaoh, see BT *Sotah* 11a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:9; 27:3, 6. On his being an idolatrous priest, see Exodus 3:1; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:32; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 11; *Zohar* 2:13b, 68a, 69a; 3:122a, 196b–197a.

17. **until the blessed Holy One ascended… Torah was not given…** Until God was completely glorified by the submission and acknowledgment of Pharaoh and Jethro, He did not give the Torah at Mount Sinai (as recounted in Exodus 19–20).

The verses in Exodus 18 read: *Blessed is YHVH, who has rescued you from the hand of Egypt and from the hand of Pharaoh, who rescued the people from under the hand of Egypt. Now I know that YHVH is greater than all the gods…*

18. **[Rabbi Shim'on] opened…** The passage beginning here and extending to the top of 68a (at note 22) does not appear in certain manuscripts (e.g., N38, R1), and only a small part of it is included in the Cremona edition. Most of it appears in a separate column in O2 and O17; all, or virtually all of it, in N37, N47, *OY*, and the Mantua edition.

None of these sources provides an opening name. *OY* and Mantua read simply: "He opened, saying…" Galante

assumes that Rabbi El'azar is the speaker. I have adopted the emendation proposed by Elijah ben Solomon, the Vilna Gaon (*Yahel Or*): "Rabbi Shim'on opened." See *MmD*; below, at note 23. Cf. above, note 1.

19. **King David rose…** Traditionally, David is the author of Psalms. See BT *Berakhot* 3b: "Rabbi Shim'on the Ḥasid said, 'There was a harp suspended above [King] David's bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn.'"

See Psalms 119:62; *Zohar* 3:11a. On the kabbalistic ritual of rising at midnight to study Torah, see above, p. 99, n. 106.

20. **When the blessed Holy One arouses…** When *Shekhinah* sustains Her angelic forces.

The verse in Proverbs concludes: *and a portion for her maidens*.

21. ***May earth yield her harvest…*** May *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *earth*) yield Her blessings. Afterward, when David contemplated the various verses uttered by the angels, the wind, and the harp, he arranged them into this one psalm. He focused particularly on the verse of the harp —*Peoples will praise You, O God; peoples will praise You all together*—since God's glory is perfected when other nations acknowledge Him.

22. **When Moses came to Pharaoh…** Though at first Pharaoh denied God and refused to release the Israelites, eventually he acknowledged Him and relented.

Exodus 5:1–3 reads: *Afterward Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says YHVH, God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may celebrate to Me in the wilderness.'" Pharaoh said, "Who is YHVH, that I should heed His voice to let Israel go? I do not know YHVH, nor will I let Israel go." They* [Moses and Aaron] *said, "The God of the Hebrews happened upon us. Let us go a three days' journey*

into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to YHVH our God, lest He strike us with pestilence or sword.”

The verse in Exodus 9 reads: *This time I have sinned! YHVH is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong*. The verse in Exodus 15 continues: *the dukes of Moab, trembling seized them*.

On Pharaoh ruling the whole world, see *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:5; *Zohar* 2:6a, 16b–17a (*MhN*), 49a. “Regnant king” renders מלכא קרופינוס (*malka qerofinus*). *Qerofinus* is based on רופינוס (*rufinus*), which derives from the Latin *rufus*, “red-haired.” The name Rufinus is shared by various early Christian saints, a fourth-century Roman minister, and Tineus Rufus, the second-century governor of Palestine ordered by Emperor Hadrian to crush the Jewish rebellion. In the *Zohar, rufinus* usually refers to a royal official. See 1:148b; 2:37a, 40a, 58b, 85a, 175a; Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *rufinus*. For the medieval Castilian usage, see Corominas, *Diccionario*, s.v. *rufián*. Cf. Aramaic, רופילא (*rufila*), “high official.”

On Jethro being an idolatrous priest, see above, end of note 16.

23. ***Peoples, O God…*** עמים אלהים (*Ammim Elohim*), which Rabbi Shim’on may be interpreting as “rulers of people who think of themselves as *elohim*, ‘gods,’” or “the supreme ones among the nations (such as Pharaoh and Jethro).” See *Haggahot Maharḥu*; Galante; *NO*; *MmD*.

24. ***As a father has compassion for his children…*** Rabbi Shim’on’s compassionate wisdom is unique. Rabbi Abba rejoices over what he has learned from the Master because in the world that is coming, ignorance of such wisdom is shameful.

On this future shame, see *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 1; *Midrash Mishlei* 10; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 6:152–53; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 62; *Zohar* 2:123b; 3:144a (*IR*), 287b (*IZ*), 291a (*IZ*), 295a (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 70d (*ShS*). The

verse in Psalms concludes: *so YHVH has compassion for those who revere Him*.

25. **Of Jethro…** Rabbi Abba wonders how Rabbi El'azar could have associated Jethro with the title *priest of On*, since this designates Joseph's father-in-law, whereas Jethro is described in Exodus as *priest of Midian*.

See above, notes 14, 16. For the title *priest of Midian*, see also Exodus 2:16; 18:1.

26. **All is one…** Rabbi Shim'on explains the relation (in fact, identity) of *priest of On* and *priest of Midian*, which represent the demonic counterparts of a pair of closely linked *sefirot*. *Priest of On* (the title of Joseph's father-in-law) is the demonic counterpart of *Yesod*, who is symbolized by Joseph. *Priest of Midian* (the title of Moses' father-in-law) is the demonic counterpart of *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by Moses. *Yesod* is an extension of *Tif'eret*, so both Moses and Joseph "occupy a single rung," symbolized by the name of the letter ו (*vav*), which can be spelled with two *vavs*: וו (*vav*). This letter, whose numerical value is six, often symbolizes *Tif'eret* together with the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). Just as *Tif'eret* and *Yesod* constitute a single unit, so do *priest of On* and *priest of Midian*.

Alternatively, *priest of On* symbolizes the masculine demonic potency (counterpart of *Yesod*), while כהן מדין (*kohen midyan*), *priest of Midian*, symbolizes the feminine demonic potency, as indicated by the phrase in Proverbs: אשת מדינים (*eshet midyanim*), *quarrelsome wife*.

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *Better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and vexatious wife*. For the expression *eshet midyanim, quarrelsome wife*, see Proverbs 21:9; 25:24; 27:15.

27. **who will illumine the radiance of Torah?…** When Rabbi Shim'on departs from the world.

On being left orphaned, see Rabbi Akiva's exclamation at the death of Rabbi Eli'ezer son of Hurkanos (*Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 25): "Woe unto me, my master, because of

you! Woe unto me, my teacher, because of you! For you have left the whole generation orphaned!" See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 16; *Zohar* 1:99a (*MhN*); 2:23b; 3:100b, 232b, 236a; *ZḤ* 7a (*MhN*), 19c (*MhN*).

On Rabbi Shim'on's influence enduring until the Messiah, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:15: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai used to say, 'Let Abraham bring near [to God, thereby saving from judgment] those from his generation until mine, and I will bring near those from my generation until King Messiah comes.'"

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 35:2; JT *Berakhot* 9:2, 13d; BT *Sukkah* 45b; *Zohar* 3:159a, 206a, 241b; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 1–84. Cf. above, p. 35 and n. 156. On the verse in Isaiah, see *Zohar* 1:140a (*MhN*); 3:23a.

28. ***Jethro, priest of Midian, heard*** The full verse reads: *Jethro, priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard all that Elohim had done for Moses and for Israel His people, that YHVH had brought Israel out of Egypt*.

29. **At first... *Elohim*... afterward... *YHVH*...** Rabbi Ḥiyya wonders why the verse switches from one divine name to another. He explains that *Elohim* refers to *Shekhinah*, who shared Israel's exile in Egypt and protected them, whereas *YHVH* (the supreme Name) can signify *Binah*, through whose power they were liberated from slavery.

According to the Bible, every seventh year is a Sabbatical, during which the land must lie fallow and at the end of which all debts are remitted (Leviticus 25:1–24; Deuteronomy 15:1–3). After seven Sabbaticals, in the fiftieth year, comes the Jubilee, when slaves are released and land reverts to its original owner (Leviticus 25:8–55). In Kabbalah the Jubilee symbolizes *Binah*, who in general is characterized by the number fifty, based on BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, where Rav and Shemu'el teach: "Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)." As Jubilee, *Binah*

is the source of liberation, including the liberation from Egyptian bondage.

On *Binah* and the Exodus, see above, p. 90 and n. 77, p. 192 and n. 186; *Zohar* 1:21b; 2:46a, 83b, 85a–b; 3:262a.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see BT *Megillah* 29a: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai says, 'Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of the blessed Holy One! Wherever they went in exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them.... When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them.... And even when they are destined to be redeemed, *Shekhinah* will be with them.'" See above, p. 91, n. 79.

The name יהוה (*YHVH*) is often associated with *Tif'eret*, but when it is vocalized with the vowels of אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*), it signifies *Binah*. See *Zohar* 2:97b; 3:10b, 11b, 65a; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 83b–84b; *Nefesh David*. On the switch from *Elohim* to *YHVH*, see Ibn Ezra and Naḥmanides on the verse.

30. **Alternatively, *all that Elohim had done*...** In the preceding paragraph, Rabbi Ḥiyya interpreted the verse as referring to God's protection and deliverance of Moses and Israel together. Now he shows that the verse may allude to various divine acts, some performed for Moses on his own and some for all of the Israelites.

God rescued Moses from drowning in the Nile by arranging for Pharaoh's daughter to find him (Exodus 2). Then, after he was charged with killing an Egyptian (see Exodus 2:11–15), God saved him from Pharaoh's executioner.

The two verses from Exodus 1 and 2 demonstrate God's care for His people. The full verse in Exodus 2 reads: *YHVH heard their moaning, and YHVH remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob*. The concluding verse means: the more the Israelites were oppressed by the Egyptians, the more they increased.

On Moses being saved from the executioner's sword, see *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Yitro*) 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus

18:4; JT *Berakhot* 9:1, 13a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:5; *Devarim Rabbah* 2:29; *Midrash Tehillim* 4:3; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:31.

31. **Why is this different…** In this acrostic psalm the first eight verses are couplets whose two lines each begin with a consecutive letter of the alphabet, from א (*alef*) through ע (*ayin*). The two concluding verses are triplets whose three lines each begin with one of the concluding alphabetical letters, from פ (*pe*) through ת (*tav*).

Rabbi Yose wonders why the verse structure changes. He explains that the two triplets allude to the two sefirotic triads of *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Netsaḥ, Hod, Yesod* ("six aspects"). Furthermore, the triplet of verse 9 alludes to the three redemptions of Israel: from the kingdoms of Babylon, Greece, and Rome. (The "first redemption," from Egypt, is not included here, since David the psalmist is prophesying about future deliverance.) The triplet of verse 10 alludes to the three parts of the Bible—Torah, Prophets, and Writings. This verse reads: ראשית (*Reshit*), *Beginning, of wisdom is awe of YHVH;* שכל טוב (*sekhel tov*), *sound understanding, for all who practice it*. תהלתו (*Tehillato*), *His praise, endures forever*. The entire Bible derives from *wisdom*.

For other interpretations of the "three redemptions," see *OY*; *MM*; Soncino.

32. ***Redemption He sent to His people…*** Now, offering an alternative interpretation, Rabbi Yose applies this verse to the Exodus.

The simple sense of the middle verset is *He ordained His covenant* לעולם (*le-olam*), *forever*; but Rabbi Yose understands *olam* according to its postbiblical meaning: *world*. Here he adopts the rabbinic view that Jethro converted to Judaism, serving as a model for other Gentiles and demonstrating that, in fact, God *ordained His covenant for the* [whole] *world*. God's name is especially hallowed when non-Jews (deriving from the Other Side) submit to the yoke of heaven.

On Jethro's conversion, see *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Yitro*) 1–2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 18:27; *Sifrei*, Numbers 78; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 9:6. The image of coming "under the wings of *Shekhinah*" derives from Ruth 2:11–12, where Boaz says to Ruth: *I have been told of all that you did for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband, how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth and came to a people you had not known before. May YHVH reward your deed, and may you have a full recompense from YHVH, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have sought refuge*. Based on this verse, the metaphor of coming under the wings of *Shekhinah* is used in rabbinic literature to describe conversion. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 2:9: "If a convert comes to convert, one should extend a hand to him to bring him under the wings of *Shekhinah*."

See *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 18:6; BT *Shabbat* 31a; *Zohar* 1:13a–b; 2:70a; 3:168a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 16, 212–13; Wijnhoven, "The *Zohar* and the Proselyte," 123–25.

33. **You cannot find anything… that a person should reject…** Just as Moses did not reject or disdain the advice of Jethro. See Exodus 18:24; below at note 46.

On the idea that all creatures fulfill a role or mission ordained by God, see JT *Berakhot* 9:2, 13c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 22:3; BT *Shabbat* 77b; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 5:8; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 49; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 18:22; *Shemot Rabbah* 10:1; *Zohar* 2:28a; 3:36b, 107a. On not despising or disparaging anyone, see M *Avot* 4:3; *Zohar* 1:164a.

34. **don't kill it** Contrast this to the saying of Rabbi El'azar's father, Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai, in *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 1: "The best of serpents—crush its head!'"

See *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:7; JT *Qiddushin* 4:14, 66b; BT *Shabbat* 121b; *OY*; Galante; Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*; *MmD*.

35. ***Does the snake bite…*** The full verse reads: *If the snake bites because no* לחש (*laḥash*), *charm, was uttered, there is no advantage to the charmer.* *Laḥash* means "whisper, incantation, charm, spell." Here Rabbi El'azar understands it as "whisper," referring to a divine whisper commanding the snake to kill someone who deserves to die.

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 26:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 10:11; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 4; *Zohar* 2:268b; 3:183b; *ZḤ* 54a, 78a (*MhN, Rut*).

36. **saves a person from other things…** Sometimes the snake kills another threatening creature. See *Zohar* 3:107a. Cf. 1:201b; 3:111a.

On the idea that God creates nothing in vain, see JT *Berakhot* 9:2, 13c; BT *Shabbat* 77b; above, note 33.

37. ***Elohim saw*—אלהים חיים (*Elohim Ḥayyim*), Living God…** *Binah*, the Divine Mother, who watches over all, from the sefirotic realm above through the worlds below.

On the connection between this verse and the idea expressed in the preceding paragraphs, see *Zohar* 3:107a.

38. ***And it was good*—the right side. *Very*—the left side…** The divine right side (characterized by Love) and the divine left side (characterized by harsh Judgment) are ultimately one, both deriving from *Elohim* (*Binah*). The right side generates the Angel of Life; the left side, the Angel of Death.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 9:10 (per Oxford MS 147, Paris MS 149, and *Yalqut Shim'oni*): "Rabbi Shemu'el son of Rav Yitsḥak said, '*Behold, it was good*—this is the Angel of Life; *very*—this is the Angel of Death.'"

According to Rabbi Shemu'el, the Angel of Death is *very good* because he kills those who fail to accumulate good deeds. According to *Zohar* 2:149b, he is *very good* because the awareness of mortality stimulates a person to return to God. See 1:14a, 47a, 144b; 2:98a, 103a, 149b–150a, 163a, 249a (*Heikh*), 264b (*Heikh*). Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 9:5.

39. ***Elohim saw…Elohim* below…*Elohim* above…** The wording *Elohim saw that it was good* appears throughout the account of Creation, once on each of the six days—except for the second day (when it does not appear) and the third (when it appears twice). The wording *Elohim saw all that He had made, and look, it was very good!* appears at the end of this account.

Above (at note 37), Rabbi Abba had said that in this concluding verse *Elohim* refers to *Binah*. Now he indicates that the name *Elohim* applies to both *Binah* (who rules those in the sefirotic realm above) and *Shekhinah* (who rules those below). For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital; Galante; *MM*; *MmD*. Cf. below, note 143.

Alternatively, throughout the account of Creation, *Elohim* refers solely to *Binah*, known as *Elohim Ḥayyim* (see above, note 37). She illumines all the "lamps above" (the *sefirot* beneath Her) and those below (namely, the powers of the worlds below *Shekhinah*).

40. **Tosefta** "Addendum, Addenda." The *Matnitin* and *Tosefta* of the *Zohar* consist mostly of anonymous enigmatic revelations. The terseness of these passages recalls the style of the Mishnah, and they appear distinct from the *Zohar*'s running commentary on the Torah. This passage, which concludes below at note 44, interrupts Rabbi Abba's presentation. On a possible connection between the two, see below, near the end of note 44; *OY*, 103b, 106a; Galante.

On the *Matnitin* and *Tosefta*, see Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 216; Gottlieb, *Meḥqarim*, 163–214.

41. **Within concealment of the concealed…** Within the most concealed realm (*Keter*) was engraved the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, symbolized by the smallest letter, י (*yod*)—engraved so subtly that it "was engraved and not engraved." Abiding within *Keter* (also known as Will), this point sustains all, conveying some of what it receives from

Ein Sof (which cannot be depicted at all and transcends Will). See *Zohar* 1:15a; 2:126b.

42. **engraving desired to cover itself…** The primordial point of *Ḥokhmah* expanded into the circle (or palace) of *Binah*, containing fifty gates.

See *Zohar* 1:15a; 2:126b. The image of *Binah*'s "fifty gates" derives from BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, where Rav and Shemu'el teach: "Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)."

43. **Within, within…** Within the palace of *Binah*, the primordial point was hidden, filling the palace with light. Paradoxically, concealment yields radiance.

44. **six curtains… five…** *Binah* is adorned with six *sefirot* (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*), generated from Her. "Those six curtains are five" apparently refers to the fact that the first of these six, *Ḥesed*, is not to be counted together with the others since it remains joined to *Binah* and conveys Her emanation to the other five. (Alternatively, *Tif'eret* and *Yesod* constitute a single unit, turning "six" into "five.") The "one embroidery" is apparently *Ḥesed*, which covers *Binah* and through which She gazes upon all below.

Binah—called here סכלתנו (*sukhletanu*), "Understanding"—conceals the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom) and conveys the totally hidden energy of Will of Wills (apparently *Keter* or its initial impulse), which is so concealed that it is described as "existing and not existing." "Blessed be He" may refer to *Binah* (containing the point of *Ḥokhmah*), who is blessed from the realm of *Keter* ("concealed of concealment"). For various interpretations, see *OY*; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

The description of *Binah*—"gazes and sees all… gazing constantly, to illumine below"—matches Rabbi Abba's description (above at note 37): "gazing to illumine them and watch over them." On Her never sleeping, cf. Psalms

121:4. On the constantly open divine eye, see *Zohar* 3:130a (*IR*).

45. **Come and see: Jethro…** Following the brief *Tosefta*, Rabbi Abba's presentation resumes. He refers to Jethro's advice to Moses on how to organize the administration of justice (Exodus 18:13–27). Justice and judgment pertain to the divine realm, not the demonic.

The context in Psalms (147:19–20) reads: *He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and judgments to Israel. He has not done so for any other nation; of such judgments they know not. Hallelujah*.

46. **person should not act disdainfully…** Just as the great Moses did not disdain Jethro but rather heeded his advice.

See above, note 33. On the power of the word of a commoner, see BT *Berakhot* 7a, *Megillah* 15a. The verse in Exodus concludes: *and did all that he had said*.

47. ***Jethro heard…*** For the full verse, see above, note 28.

48. ***among the nations…*** Rabbi Abba understands this phrase as "on account of the nations," through whose acknowledgment God is exalted. The "lamp" symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is kindled by Israel's devotion but also empowered by the subjugation of other nations. On the symbolism of the lamp, cf. *Zohar* 1:51a–b.

49. **fear and awe of the blessed Holy One…** The other nations were stunned by God's miraculous deliverance of Israel from Egypt and the splitting of the Red Sea. When they saw that Jethro, the great idolatrous priest, accepted the one true God, they too withdrew from idolatry and God's name was glorified. Consequently, this Torah portion opens with the verse *Jethro heard…* (Exodus 18:1) and is named after him.

See above at note 17. On the fear and awe experienced by other nations following the Exodus, see Exodus 15:14–16. On Jethro as an idolatrous priest, see above, note 16.

50. **Pharaoh had three wise men…** According to rabbinic tradition, these three biblical figures all served as advisors to Pharaoh.

See BT *Sotah* 11a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:9. On Job's role, see above, p. 141 and n. 17. On drawing down astral powers, see *Zohar* 1:99b–100a; 2:112a; Vital.

51. **Job was imbued with awe…** Such awe is essential if one seeks to draw down supernatural power, whether from divine or demonic sources—except for certain weak demons, who can be contacted even without awe. In order to contact supernal, holy entities, awe is always required. Job's awe of the demonic realm was soon transmuted, as Rabbi Abba goes on to explain.

On the possibility of drawing down holy or demonic powers, see *Zohar* 1:99b–100a.

52. **Jethro needed to worship…** Jethro maintained contact with the demonic realm constantly so that he could draw on its power whenever necessary. Balaam clung to that realm through sorcery. Upon witnessing the miracles in Egypt, Job redirected his awe toward God. Jethro, however, did not acknowledge Him until after the splitting of the Red Sea and the drowning of the Egyptians.

On Job's awe (or fear) of God, see Job 1:1; M *Sotah* 5:5. According to rabbinic tradition, the phrase in Exodus 9:20, *whoever feared the word of* YHVH *among Pharaoh's servants*, refers to Job. See above, pp. 269–70, n. 248; cf. p. 139, n. 11.

On the bonds of sorcery that kept the Israelites enslaved, see above, p. 178 at n. 141; p. 268 at n. 242.

53. **he glimpsed from afar through that filth…** Although Balaam clung to the Other Side, he was still able to glimpse the realm of holiness through a surrounding aura, which links the demonic realm to its divine source and sustenance.

An allusion to this aura appears in Ezekiel's vision. The full verse reads: *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming*

from the north [symbolizing the divine left side, source of the demonic realm], *a great cloud and flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it; and from within it, like the color of amber, from within the fire*.

See *Zohar* 2:81b–82a, 203b, 216a; *ZḤ* 38a–b; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 59–60; *TZ* 18, 36a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:463–64, 509. Cf. *Zohar* 2:215b, 227a–b, 268a (*Heikh*); 3:251b–252a.

54. **with all those words...** Referring to all of Balaam's prophecies. "Words" renders מלין (*millin*), which can also mean "matters."

On the phenomenon of unintentional prophecy ("He spoke without knowing what he was speaking"), see *Bereshit Rabbah* 91:7; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 43; *Zohar* 1:200a.

Rabbi Abba compares Balaam's prophetic vision to a technique for seeing colors. By closing one's eyes and pressing a finger on the eyeball until it moves, colors of the spectrum appear, corresponding to the hidden colors of the *sefirot*. See above, p. 81 and n. 38.

The original meaning of the phrase שתום העין (*shetum ha-ayin*) may be either *whose eye is closed* or *whose eye is open*. Here Rabbi Abba links the root שתם (*shtm*) with סתם (*stm*), "to close."

See Milgrom, *Numbers*, on the verse; BT *Sanhedrin* 105a; *Zohar* 1:68b; 2:237a; 3:147b. The verse reads: *Utterance of Balaam son of Be'or, utterance of the man* העין שתום (*shetum ha-ayin*).

55. **like most dreams...** This image of a grain of truth in a haystack represents an extreme reformulation of the saying attributed to Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai in BT *Berakhot* 55a: "Just as there cannot be wheat without straw, so there cannot be a dream without nonsense." See *Zohar* 1:183a.

The "tenuous, impudent forms" are those demonic forces lacking any connection to the realm of holiness. The

final sentence apparently means that Balaam, through his vision, experienced both the demonic and the holy realms.

56. **Happy is the share of Moses…** Just as Balaam, rooted in the demonic realm, glimpsed the realm of holiness, so Moses, rooted in the divine realm, glimpsed the realm of impurity.

On the comparison and contrast between Moses and Balaam, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 357; *Zohar* 2:21b–22a (*MhN*); 3:193b.

57. ***a bush*, surely, was within that holiness…** The *bush* of thorns symbolizes the demonic forces, which are surrounded by a holy *flame of fire*. Conversely, pure and impure are often depicted as a holy kernel surrounded by a demonic shell. The two opposites are interdependent: demonic powers are sustained by the divine source, while their testing and punishing of humanity serve to reinforce the moral order.

On the image of shell and kernel, see *Zohar* 1:19b–20a; 44b (*Heikh*); 2:15b (*MhN*), 74b, 140b, 233b; Vol. 1, p. 151, n. 341; *OY*. On the verse from Job, see *Zohar* 1:102a; 2:237a–b; 3:48b. Cf. 2:12b.

58. ***And her two sons*** The context (Exodus 18:2–3, 5–6) reads: *Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after her being sent away, and her two sons, one of whom was named Gershom… and the other was named Eliezer…. Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, and his sons and his wife came to Moses, to the wilderness in which he was encamped, the mountain of God. He said to Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you, and your wife and her two sons with her."*

59. **exerted herself for them without her husband…** While Moses was bringing the Israelites out of Egypt.

60. **word of truth: *her sons*, surely** Perhaps alluding to the fact that the mother's identity is more certain than the father's, or meaning that her sons resembled her. For

various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital; *MM*; *Nefesh David*; *Yahel Or*; *Sullam*; *NZ*; *MmD*.

61. **Moses was coupling with another, supernal place…** Moses was united with *Shekhinah* and is actually described as Her spouse: *husband of Elohim*; so it would have been disrespectful toward *Shekhinah* to describe these sons as *his*. Only after Moses parted from *Shekhinah* to greet his father-in-law are they described in these terms.

On Moses as husband of *Elohim*, see above, p. 74, n. 17.

62. **you begin the word fittingly…** Rabbi Shim'on approves how his son El'azar has explained the wording *her sons*, but as for the subsequent wording—*his sons and his wife*—Rabbi Shim'on contends that this refers not to Moses' sons and wife but to Jethro's. They all came together with Jethro to convert: "all is one entirety."

For the tradition that Jethro was blessed with sons through the merit of Moses' presence, see *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 16.

63. **So it was with Jacob…** Similarly Laban was blessed with sons through the merit of Jacob's presence. As for Jethro, when he eventually parted from Moses and returned to Midian he left his sons.

On Laban's being blessed with sons through the merit of Jacob's presence, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 73:12; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 7; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 16, *Balaq* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Balaq* 17; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 20:19.

On the phrase "under the wings of *Shekhinah*," see above, note 32. The verse in Judges reads: *The sons of the Kenite* [Jethro's title], *Moses' father-in-law, went up from the City of Palms* [namely, Jericho].

64. ***mountain of YHVH*—Abraham…** Traditionally, Mount Moriah (where Abraham bound Isaac on the altar) is identified with the Temple Mount. Here Rabbi Shim'on associates Abraham with *the mountain of YHVH* because this patriarch (who was, in a sense, the first convert) referred to the dwelling place of *Shekhinah* as *mountain*. Just as a

mountain is accessible to all, so *Shekhinah* welcomes all converts who come under Her wings.

On Mount Moriah as the site of the Temple, see 2 Chronicles 3:1; Jubilees 18:13; *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Genesis 22:14; JT *Berakhot* 4:5, 8c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 55:7; BT *Ta'anit* 16a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:4; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 39; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:2.

On Abraham and the verse in Isaiah, see BT *Pesaḥim* 88a; Rashi, BT *Ḥullin* 91b, s.v. *she-hitpallelu*. Cf. *Pesiqta Rabbati* 39; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:2. On Abraham as *mountain*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 50:11; *Aggadat Bereshit* 25:2. Cf. above, p. 312, n. 397. The verse in Genesis begins: *Abraham called the name of that place* יהוה יראה (*YHVH yir'eh*), *YHVH sees*. The precise meaning of the second half of the verse is uncertain.

65. ***To the house*—Jacob...** Likewise, according to rabbinic tradition, the site of Jacob's dream (in Genesis 28) is identified as the future site of the Temple. Jacob referred to this dwelling place of *Shekhinah* not as *mountain* but as *house*.

The verse in Isaiah reads: *to the house of the God of Jacob*. On Jacob and this verse, see BT *Pesaḥim* 88a; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 39; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:2; Rashi, BT *Ḥullin* 91b, s.v. *she-hitpallelu*. On the identification of the site of Jacob's dream as the Temple, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 28:11; *Bereshit Rabbah* 69:7; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 39; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:2.

66. ***Mountain* and *house*... single rung...** Although both images allude to *Shekhinah*, *mountain* alludes to the fact that She welcomes all converts under Her wings (as a mountain is accessible to all), whereas *house* alludes to Her greater intimacy with Israel.

On the relation between converts and *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:13a–b, 96a; 2:27a, 87a; 3:14a–b, 168a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 16, 212–13; Wijnhoven, "The *Zohar* and the Proselyte, 123–25." On the distinction between

converts and born Jews, see Judah Halevi, *Kuzari*, 1:27. On the distinction between *mountain* and *house*, see the unidentified *Zohar* passage quoted by Recanati on Genesis 22:14, 26d.

67. **What is written here of Jethro?...** The full verse reads: *Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, and his sons and his wife came to Moses, to the wilderness in which he was encamped, the mountain of* Elohim. Rabbi Shim'on wonders why the verse specifies *to the wilderness*. Isn't this fact obvious? He explains that (the ownerless) *wilderness* refers to *Shekhinah*, also known as *the* [ownerless] *mountain of Elohim*, who welcomes converts such as Jethro and his family, providing them with new souls.

"To generate" renders למעבד (*le-me'evad*), "to make." The phrase "to generate (or make) their souls" derives from Genesis 12:5: ואת הנפש אשר עשו (*ve-et ha-nefesh asher asu*), *and the souls* [or: *persons*] *they* [namely, Abraham and Sarah] *had acquired* [or: *made* their own], *in Haran*. The simple sense of the phrase is slaves or servants acquired by Abraham and Sarah, but the Midrash reads the words hyperliterally: *and the souls they had made in Haran*, referring to converts.

See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 32; *Bereshit Rabbah* 39:14; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:3; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 12; B, 26; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 12. On the convert's new soul, see *Zohar* 2:95b, 98b; 3:167b–168a.

68. **that place...** *Shekhinah*, who is accessible to all converts (see above at note 64).

Traditionally, the term גר צדק (*ger tsedeq*), "convert of righteousness," refers to a convert who accepts all the laws of Judaism. Here, it implies that such a person is linked with *Shekhinah*, who is known as צדק (*Tsedeq*), Righteousness. Rabbi Shim'on emphasizes the literal meaning of *ger*, "stranger," indicating that a convert, although cleaving to *Shekhinah*, is still in a sense a "stranger," having left his own people and now dwelling in a new, unfamiliar place.

See Judah Halevi, *Kuzari* 1:27; *Zohar* 1:13a–b, 96a; 2:27a, 87a; 3:14a–b, 168a.

69. **from our Master** From Rabbi Shim'on himself.

70. ***This is the book…*** See BT *Avodah Zarah* 5a: "Did not Resh Lakish say: 'What is the meaning of the verse *This is the book of the generations of Adam*…? Did Adam possess a book? Rather, this teaches that the blessed Holy One showed Adam every generation with its expounders, every generation with its sages, every generation with its leaders.'"

See *Seder Olam Rabbah* 30; *Bereshit Rabbah* 24:2 (and parallels discussed in Theodor's note); BT *Bava Metsi'a* 85b–86a, *Sanhedrin* 38b; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 12; *Shemot Rabbah* 40:3; *Zohar* 1:37a–b, 55a–b, 90b, 227b; 2:70a (*RR*); *ZḤ* 16d (*MhN*), 37b; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:117–18, n. 110. Cf. below, note 76. The verse in Genesis reads:… *in the image of God He made him*.

71. **זה ספר (*Zeh sefer*), *This is the book…*** The book above is *Binah*, who contains and reveals everything. The book below is *Shekhinah*, who contains and reveals everything that issues from Her male partner, *Yesod*. Thus She is ספר זכרון (*sefer zikkaron*), Book of Remembrance—the book containing זכר (*zakhar*), the "male."

Yesod is also known as Righteous One and זה (*zeh*), *this*. Together, *Yesod* and *Shekhinah* constitute the androgynous divine entity known as אדם (*adam*). From *Yesod*, human souls stream forth as He unites with the garden of *Shekhinah*, watering Her; thus these souls are *the generations of adam*.

In Kabbalah the verse from Genesis 2 is interpreted to mean that the flow of emanation issues from *Ḥokhmah* (*Eden*) and is conveyed by *Binah* through *Yesod*, then entering *the garden* of *Shekhinah*.

On the divine books, see *Zohar* 1:8b; 2:56a, 126b, 137b, 200a, 246a (*Heikh*). The phrase Book of Remembrance derives from Malachi 3:16. On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see

above, p. 78 and n. 30. On *Yesod* as *zeh*, see above, p. 173 and n. 123; *Zohar* 2:70a (*RR*).

72. **Afterward... *Adam* below...** The first reference to אדם (*adam*) in this verse (*the generations of adam*) pertains to the androgynous divine couple who generate human souls. The second reference (*on the day of God's creating adam*) pertains to the androgynous human being (soon to be split into Adam and Eve).

The image alludes to the mirror of *Shekhinah*, who temporarily reflects all possible forms. The human being, created in the divine image, shares this multifaceted nature.

"Visionary mirror" renders חיזו (*ḥeizu*), which means "vision, appearance," but in the *Zohar* also "mirror." Cf. the Hebrew word מראה (*mar'ah*), which means both "vision" and "mirror." See *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Exodus 38:8; *Zohar* 1:88b, 91a, 149b, 183a, 196a, 203a; 2:23a, 221a, 267a.

On *Shekhinah* as "the image comprising all images," see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 537; *Zohar* 1:13a, 19a, 191a; *ZḤ* 59a–c (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 353; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 138; idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 58; Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 179; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 50–51; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 306–17. On the human image as comprising all images, see below at note 111.

73. **limbs, male and female, in the mystery of *behind and before*** Alluding to the original androgynous nature of the first human being, reflecting the androgynous nature of the *sefirot*.

See BT *Berakhot* 61a, in the name of Rabbi Yirmeyah son of El'azar: "The blessed Holy One created two faces in Adam, as is said: *Behind and before*, צרתני (*tsartani*), *You formed me* (Psalms 139:5)." In this verse צרתני (*tsartani*) probably means *You encompassed me*, but Rabbi Yirmeyah

interprets the root צור (*tsur*) as a by-form of יצר (*ytsr*), "to form."

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1: "Rabbi Yirmeyah son of El'azar said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him androgynous, as is said: *Male and female He created them* (Genesis 1:27).' Rabbi Shemu'el son of Naḥmani said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him with two faces. Then He sawed him and gave him two backs, one on this side and one on that."

See above, pp. 284–85 and nn. 305–6.

74. ***Behind*—in the mystery of *observe*...** *Behind* alludes to the divine female; *before*, to the divine male.

The first version of the Ten Commandments reads: זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day to keep it holy* (Exodus 20:8). The second version reads: שמור (*Shamor*), *Observe, the Sabbath day to keep it holy* (Deuteronomy 5:12). According to Kabbalah, *zakhor, remember*, suggests זכר (*zakhar*), "male," signifying the male divine potency, whereas the alternative formulation, *shamor, observe*, signifies the female, *Shekhinah*. Further, *zakhor* implies the 248 positive commandments of Torah (since time-bound positive commandments are generally incumbent only on men), while *shamor* implies the 365 negative commandments (incumbent on women as well), together totaling 613 commandments.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 7; BT *Berakhot* 20b; *Bahir* 124 (182); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 496–97; Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:8; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Sefer ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon*, 420; *Zohar* 1:5b, 47b, 48b, 164b, 199b, 248a; 2:92a–b (*Piq*), 138a; 3:81b, 92b (*Piq*), 115b, 224a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 118; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110; Wolfson, introduction to *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 63–71.

75. ***Behind* the act of Creation...** Understood as "*After* the act of Creation." This sentence may mean that Adam was formed at the end of the act of Creation, but he was intended from the very beginning: *before* the divine

Chariot (described by Ezekiel). For various interpretations, see *OY*; *MM*; *Yahel Or*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

The image of God refers to *Shekhinah*; see above, note 72. "Our Master" refers to Rabbi Shim'on; see above, note 69.

76. ***This is the book of the generations of Adam—for features…*** Here begins a discussion of physiognomy (determining temperament, character, and fate from physical appearance), metoposcopy (determination based specifically on lines, marks, and other features of the forehead), and chiromancy (determination based specifically on lines and other marks in the palm and fingers). This section extends to *Zohar* 2:78a (below, page 421). In this context the word תולדות (*toledot*), *generations (of)*, implies marks "generated" on a person, as well as "human nature, character." The passage in Genesis (5:1–2) is cited elsewhere as a biblical indication of physiognomy. Since the human being is created *in the image of God*, every physical feature conveys profound meaning. The Merkavah mystics employed techniques of physiognomy to ascertain whether a potential initiate was fit to receive esoteric teachings.

See Lewin, *Otsar ha-Ge'onim, Ḥagigah* 11b; Donnolo, *Sefer Ḥakhmoni*, 64c–d (note); Naḥmanides on Genesis 5:2; idem, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:161–63; *Zohar* 2:70a–b (*RR*); Scholem, "Cheiromancy in the Zohar"; idem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 246–305; idem, "Ein Fragment zur Physiognomik"; idem, *Kabbalah*, 317–19; Licht, "Shoqayim Siman li-Vḥirah"; Allegro, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, 88–91; Gruenwald, "Qeta'im Ḥadashim mi-Sifrut Hakkarat Panim"; idem, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 218–24; Fine, "The Art of Metoposcopy"; idem, *Physician of the Soul*, 153–64; Schäfer, *Hekhalot-Studien*, 84–95; idem, *The Hidden and Manifest God*, 137–38; Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, 95–100; Ruderman, *Kabbalah, Magic, and Science*, 132–35; Alexander, "Physiognomy, Initiation, and Rank in the

Qumran Community” ; Liebes, “Hakkarat Panim ba-Qabbalah”; Margolin, “Ḥokhmat ha-Partsuf ve-Sirtutei Kaf ha-Yad.” Cf. *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margaliot), 162; *Zohar* 1:55b; 3:75b–76a.

On *toledot, generations (of)*, as implying marks “generated” on a person, see *Zohar* 2:70b (*RR*), 78a. On *toledot* as implying “human nature, character,” see Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 272–77. On *toledot* as reincarnations, see *TZ* 70, 137a; Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 298. Cf. above, note 70.

Genesis 5:1–2 reads: *This is the book of the generations of* אדם (*adam*), *Adam* [or: *the human, humankind*]: *On the day of God’s creating adam, a human, in the image of God He made him. Male and female He created them, and He blessed them and called their name adam, human, on the day of their being created*.

In the standard printed editions of the *Zohar*, a separate section on physiognomy is included here in parallel columns (2:70a–75a); its continuation is found in *ZḤ* 35b–37c. This separate section, transmitted in the name of Rabbi Shim’on, is called *Raza de-Razin* (Secret of Secrets), a name deriving from the medieval pseudepigraphic book *Secretum secretorum*, attributed to Aristotle, which includes a section on physiognomy. (Other sections on physiognomy appear in *ZḤ* 31a–35b; *TZ* 70, 121a–138b.) The manuscripts that I have examined (M5, N38, N47, O2, O17, R1) do not include *Raza de-Razin* in the main body of the *Zohar*. That section will be translated separately in a supplementary volume.

In both *Raza de-Razin* and the main body of the *Zohar* (as well as *TZ*), the material on physiognomy is linked with Jethro’s advice to Moses on how to administer justice: *As for you*, תחזה (*teḥezeh*), *you shall behold* [or: *perceive, discern, select*], *from all the people men of caliber, revering God, men of truth, hating bribery, and you shall set chiefs of thousands, chiefs of hundreds, chiefs of fifties, and chiefs of*

tens over them. And they shall judge the people at all times, and so, every great matter they shall bring to you, and every small matter they themselves shall judge, and it will be lighter on you and they will bear it with you (Exodus 18:21–22). The word *teḥezeh, you shall behold*, is understood as implying that these judges should be selected based on principles of physiognomy. See below at note 181; *Zohar* 2:70a–b (*RR*); *ZḤ* 31a; *TZ* 70, 121b–122b; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 18:21. Cf. *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Yitro*) 2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 18:21.

Secretum secretorum is written in the form of a treatise for Aristotle's pupil Alexander the Great. It covers a wide range of topics including statecraft, ethics, medicine, physiognomy, astrology, alchemy, and magic. Considered at the time a genuine Aristotelian work, it was translated from Arabic (*Kitab Sirr al-asrar*) into Latin in the twelfth century and became one of the most widely read texts of the Middle Ages. A medieval Hebrew version entitled *Sod ha-Sodot* was edited by Moses Gaster in his *Studies and Texts in Folk-Lore*, 3:247–78 (section on physiognomy: 268–72); his English translation appears in 2:762–813 (section on physiognomy: 799–803). For an English translation from the Arabic, see Robert Steele, ed., *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 176–266 (section on physiognomy: 219–24). See Williams, *The Secret of Secrets*; Spitzer, "The Hebrew Translations of the *Sod ha-Sodot*."

77. **By hair...** On the physiognomy of hair, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:269 (English translation: 2:800); Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* 9, 26d; *Zohar* 2:71a–72b (*RR*), 74b (*RR*); 3:49a, 127b, 129a (*IR*), 131b (*IR*); *ZḤ* 35b–c, 36a, 36c–37b; Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1. Cf. Vol. 3, p. 308, n. 31.

"Curly" renders קמיט (*qemit*), "constricted, contracted, shrunk." For various interpretations of קמיט בטופסין (*qemit be-tufsin*), rendered here "constricted in frames," see *OY*; *DE*; *Sullam*; Scholem.

78. **on his own…** Not in partnership.

79. **These words…** Namely, that he is insolent.

80. **his words are heeded** See BT *Berakhot* 6b; Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 280; cf. Ecclesiastes 9:16.

81. **ז (*zayin*), of those letters of measure of our Master** This letter is the first in the phrase being discussed: זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *This is the book*. See above, notes 70, 76.

On "letters" and "measure," see *ZḤ* 41d. "Our Master" is Rabbi Shim'on. See above at notes 69, 75.

82. **י (*yod*), included in ז (*zayin*)** The letter י (*yod*) is included in the fully spelled-out name of the letter זין (*zayin*). According to another interpretation, the י (*yod*) resembles the head of the letter ז (*zayin*), whose foot resembles the letter ו (*vav*). See below at note 158; *MmD*.

83. **he will conceive ideas** Apparently meaning "he may imagine ways to deceive you."

84. **not to be separated from him…** And lose the potential benefit of associating with him.

85. **letter י (*yod*)—not included in the letter ז (*zayin*)…** See above, note 82. The *yod* is the smallest letter.

86. **before he grows old** If his hair falls out prematurely.

87. **between his eyes above the brain…** At the middle of his hairline directly up from the middle of his eyes.

On the relation between the brain and the placement of the tefillin, see BT *Eruvin* 95b; Landau, *Agur*, 36; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 77–78.

88. **letter ז (*zayin*) when it includes the letter י (*yod*)** See above, note 82.

89. **masters of qualities…** ידעי מדין (*Yade'ei middin*), "those who know *middin*," apparently deriving from מדה (*middah*), "measure, quality, nature, character," based on the root מדד (*mdd*), "to measure." See Judges 5:10: *you who sit on middin*,

where the word is variously rendered as “[extended, wide] carpets, blankets” or—based on דין (*din*), “judgment”—“the judgment seat.” See BT *Eruvin* 54b: “It was taught in the school of R. Anan: What is the meaning of the verse… *you who sit on middin*?… you who render judgment in absolute truth.”

Here the expression refers to those who know how to determine human character and nature based on physiognomy, or who know the מדות (*middot*), the divine “qualities” (*sefirot*), or who know שעור קומה (*shi’ur qomah*), “the measure of the [divine] stature.” See *Zohar* 1:133a, 241b; 2:130b, 161a; *ZḤ* 73b, 74b (*ShS*), 106b (*Tiq*); above, p. 150, n. 44. Cf. above, note 76.

“Unspecified” implies that the name *Elohim* can refer to various *sefirot* (*Binah, Gevurah, Shekhinah*), as well as to lower forces. Here it signifies the purely divine realm, or specifically *Shekhinah*. See above, note 72.

90. **By mystery of the forehead…** On metoposcopy (the physiognomy of the forehead), see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:270 (English translation: 2:801); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha’ashu’im* 2, p. 18; *Zohar* 2:71a–75a (*RR*); *ZḤ* 35b–36a, 36c–37b; Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1; above, note 76.

“Consummation of the letter זין (*zayin*)” may refer to the numerical value of נ (*nun*), fifty, as the square of the value of ז (*zayin*), seven, plus one.

“Included in the mystery of the letter *zayin*” refers to *nun* being the final letter of the fully spelled-out name of the letter זין (*zayin*). See above, note 82.

91. **The furrows on his forehead…** Perhaps meaning “If the furrows… and when he speaks… with this one, a person should not associate…”

The verse in Proverbs reads: *One who goes about gossiping reveals a secret, but the faithful of spirit conceals a matter*. See *Zohar* 3:128a (*IR*). On the phrase “the letter נ (*nun*), included in the letter זין (*zayin*),” see the preceding note.

92. **not included in the letter זין (*zayin*)...** See above, note 90. The letter ז (*zayin*) may represent Judgment because the word זין (*zayin*) means "weapon." See *Zohar* 2:71a (*RR*); *OY*.

93. **for people** To impress them.

94. **From a small thing, he envisions the great... discerning...** See BT *Ḥagigah* 14a, where one who is נבון (*navon*), "discerning," is defined as "מבין (*mevin*), understanding, one thing from another."

"That he will be embarrassed because of them" probably refers to other people's negative judgment of his lack of concern for mundane affairs.

95. **letter נ (*nun*) by itself...** The final letter of זין (*zayin*), not included with the preceding letters ז (*zayin*) or י (*yod*). The fully spelled-out name of the letter *zayin* symbolizes *Din* (Judgment), another name for *Gevurah* (Power); so this person, not being included with the other letters of *zayin*, lacks power and is weak. See above, note 92.

"Adjacent to the letter ס (*samekh*)" may refer to the fact that *nun* and *samekh* are consecutive letters in the alphabet. *Samekh* also begins the next word of the phrase under discussion: זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *This is the book*. See above, notes 70, 76, 81. For other interpretations, see *OY*; *MmD*.

96. **By mystery of the eyes...** On the physiognomy of the eyes, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:268–69 (English translation: 2:799–800); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, p. 18; Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* 9, 28a; *Zohar* 2:72b–75a (*RR*); *ZḤ* 35b–36b, 36d–37a; Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1.

The letter ס (*samekh*) begins the second word of the phrase זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *This is the book*. See the preceding note. Instead of *samekh*, a number of manuscripts (N38, O2, O17, R1) read זין (*zayin*).

"Sitting perfectly" derives from Song of Songs 5:12. See *Zohar* 1:199b; *Zohar* 2:73a (*RR*); *OY*. "Not sunken" means not sunken in its socket.

97. **Colors of the eye are four…** The white is the color of the sclera. The black (perhaps meaning "dark") is apparently the color of the iris. The green may characterize the transition zone between the iris and the black pupil. On the colors of the eye, see above, pp. 80–81, n. 37.

98. **His eyebrows are thick…** Apparently meaning "If his eyebrows are thick… and in those colors of the eye are red traces…, then those traces are called…"

On the physiognomy of the eyebrows, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:269 (English translation: 2:800–1); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, p. 18; *ZḤ* 35b; Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1.

On "masters of qualities," see above, note 89. The letters ס (*samekh*) and ה (*he*) appear consecutively in the phrase under discussion: זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *This is the book*. See above, note 95.

99. **with what is known…** This may mean "with what is known by others" or "with what has been made known to him." For various interpretations, see *OY; Soncino*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

100. **The colors of his eyes…** Instead of גווני (*gavnei*), "the colors of," the manuscripts and early printed editions read גבינ (*gevinei*), "the eyebrows of." See *OY*.

The letters ז (*zayin*), ה (*he*), and ס (*samekh*) appear consecutively in the phrase under discussion: זה ספר (*zeh sefer*), *This is the book*. See above, note 95.

101. **mouth speaking boastfully…** The phrase derives from Daniel 7:8.

102. **letter ה (*he*)…ז (*zayin*)…ס (*samekh*)…** On these three letters, see above, note 100; *OY*; *MmD*. On *samekh*, cf. *Zohar* 2:127a–b.

103. **letter מ (*mem*), included in the letter סמך (*samekh*)** The letter מ (*mem*) is included in the fully spelled-out name of the letter סמך (*samekh*).

104. **letter כ (*kaf*), included in the letter סמך (*samekh*)…** The letter כ (*kaf*) is the final letter of the fully

spelled-out name of the letter סמך (*samekh*).

105. **features of the face are not in external signs…** Whereas the other physiognomic features mentioned so far (of the hair, forehead, and eyes) are apparent to anyone, the features of the face can be discerned only by the wise.

On the physiognomy of the face, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:270 (English translation: 2:801); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, pp. 17–18; *Zohar* 2:74a (*RR*); 3:123a (*RM*); *ZḤ* 35b, 36d–37a; 72a–b (*ShS*); Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1. Cf. Wisdom of Ben Sira 19:29; *Bereshit Rabbah* 73:12; *Zohar* 1:96b; 3:6a, 76a, 157a; Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 254, 299.

106. **spirit… engraved with mysteries of letters…** These Hebrew letters are perceived only by the eyes of the wise, corresponding to the person's character and behavior.

The phrasing resembles the description of the second *sefirah* in *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:10: "Spirit from spirit. He engraved and carved in it twenty-two elemental letters."

107. **World That Is Coming…** *Binah* (known by this title) generates all twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, which are woven into the tapestry of Torah, symbolizing *Tif'eret*. The "river issuing from Eden" represents the flow of emanation issuing from *Ḥokhmah*, extending from *Binah* through *Yesod*. Spirits and souls pour from this river into *Shekhinah*, and from Her into humans below.

See *Zohar* 3:83a (*Piq*); Wolfson, "Dimmui Antropomorfi ve-ha-Simboliqah shel ha-Otiyyot be-Sefer ha-Zohar," 164–65. On *Binah* as the world that is coming, see above, p. 16, n. 63. The image of the river from Eden derives from Genesis 2:10: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*.

108. **If so, that spirit is not inscribed…** If the letters inscribing the spirit derive from *Binah* and *Tif'eret*, it seems that the spirit's mother (*Shekhinah*) does not contribute any figure.

109. **from our Master…** From Rabbi Shim'on himself; see above, note 69. The letters originate in *Binah* and are conveyed by *Yesod*, whereas *Shekhinah* provides other figures, depending on the person's character and behavior.

110. **Figure of Mother: face of human… lion… ox… eagle…** *Shekhinah* generates these four faces. In Ezekiel's vision of the divine chariot-throne, each of the *ḥayyot* (living creatures) transporting the throne includes all these faces. See Ezekiel 1:5–14; *Zohar* 1:18b–19a. Here, the spirit draws these images on human faces in the guise of letters; the images appear momentarily, perceived only by the wise. See *Zohar* 3:123a (*RM*).

111. **figure of all… a human…** The human figure comprises the other three (lion, ox, and eagle) and is seen by the wise through "eyes of the heart."

On the all-inclusive nature of the human figure, see *Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 44a (*Heikh*); 2:73a (*RR*), 80b. Cf. above, note 72.

112. **Four signs of letters…** The four veins suggest four letters spelling the word עדות (*edut*), *testimony*, testifying to this person's virtue.

On Joseph's lovableness, see Genesis 39:3–7, 21–23. On the significance of *edut*, see *Zohar* 2:221b, 229b; *ZḤ* 26d, 45b; cf. 3:295a (*IZ*). The verse in Psalms continues: *when He went forth against the land of Egypt*.

113. **seed of David…** As for anyone descended from David, the initial appearance of the face does not reveal his true character; rather, the second appearance counts. When the prophet Samuel came to anoint one of Jesse's sons as king, he first mistakenly selected the eldest, Eliab, because of his tall stature. God told him, however, *Look not at his appearance or at his tall stature*. Eliab's misleading regal appearance concealed a demonic force, whereas Jesse's youngest son, David, *was ruddy* on the outside (1 Samuel 16:12)—suggesting a demonic and frightening

quality—while beneath this surface layer he is described as *goodly to look on, and YHVH is with him*.

On "the seed of David," see *Zohar* 2:73a (*RR*); Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 286, n. 143. 1 Samuel 16:7 reads in full: *YHVH said to Samuel, "Look not at his appearance or at his tall stature, for I have rejected him. For not as man sees* [*does God see*]. *For man sees with the eyes and YHVH sees with* [or: *into*] *the heart*." The wording *goodly to look on, and YHVH is with him* combines two verses in this chapter: *He* [i.e., David] *was ruddy, with fine eyes and goodly to look on* (verse 12); *a handsome man, and YHVH is with him* (verse 18). On David's frightening ruddiness, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:8. Cf. *Zohar* 3:51a, 56a, 206b; *ZḤ* 32b.

114. **This image of the human includes all images…** See above, note 111.

115. **Seed of David, in whom that image appears…** A demonic image appears momentarily on the face of a descendant of David and is then replaced by the letters of עדות (*edut*), *testimony*. He retains enmity, which is provoked by the Other Side, but the holy kernel within the demonic shell remains pure.

The theme of retaining enmity apparently refers to David's attitude toward Shimei son of Gera, who cursed and insulted the king, accusing him of political assassination and usurping Saul's throne. David refuses to punish Shimei, but eventually on his deathbed he instructs his son Solomon to punish him. See 2 Samuel 16:5–13; 19:17–24; 1 Kings 2:8–9; *Zohar* 2:108a; *ZḤ* 79a (*MhN, Rut*).

On the simile of a serpent, see BT *Shabbat* 63a, *Yoma* 22a–b; *Zohar* 2:108a. On the image of shell and kernel, see above, note 57.

116. **Second figure…** If a person rejects evil and turns back to God, then a good spirit protrudes momentarily in the form of a lion's face—the second image from the Chariot, *on the right* (Ezekiel 1:10)—visible only to the eyes

of the wise. Alternatively, when one of the wise sees this person, the power of his vision produces the image of a lion in the heart (or mind) of the wise gazer. Afterward, the person's face appears momentarily frightening and unlovable, but immediately the wise one's heart loves him once again.

On the face turning white, see BT *Bava Metsi'a* 58b. נש ההוא בר (*Ha-hu bar nash*), "a certain person," means literally "that person." See *OY*, 155a; *MmD*.

117. **three veins… Mystery of those letters is** קרוב **(*qarov*), near…** The veins suggest these four letters, indicating this person has abandoned evil and approached God. The two connected veins on the right suggest the two components of the letter ק (*qof*); the two veins on the left suggest ר (*resh*) and ב (*vet*), while the "one extending down from those two, joined to each" suggests the letter ו (*vav*).

118. **One who is the seed of David…** Whereas others of this category appear to the wise first in the form of a lion's face (and then in human form), those descended from David appear first in the form of a human. Afterward, their faces assume the form of a mighty, terrifying lion, but not associated with demonic forces.

119. **Third figure…** If a person abandons Torah and acts sinfully, another spirit replaces the holy spirit and appears in the form of an ox's face (the third image from the Chariot), visible only to the eyes of the wise. Alternatively, when the wise see this person, that image passes through their hearts (or minds).

The ox—the image *on the left* (Ezekiel 1:10)—is associated with harsh Judgment. See above, pp. 17–18, n. 68. On the phrase "a certain person," see above, note 116.

120. **Three red safflower seeds…** Three concentrically circular veins on each side of his face, suggesting three letters. His eyes appear sunken in their sockets.

121. **Mystery of those letters…** The three circular veins on each side of this sinner's face suggest the letters ת ,ר ,כ (*kaf, resh, tav*), spelling the word כרת (*karet*), "cut off, excluded," since he is excluded from holiness. Here, these letters are associated with the wording in Isaiah: הכרת פניהם (*Hakkarat peneihem*), *The appearance of their faces, testifies against them*—sins are recorded on one's face as accusation. If a sinner turns back to God ("from left to right"), these accusatory veins subside and others—suggesting the word קרוב (*qarov*), "near"—protrude instead.

On the biblical sense of *karet*, see, e.g., Genesis 17:14; Exodus 12:15, 19; 30:33, 38; 31:14; Leviticus 7:20–21; 17:4, 9; Numbers 15:31. This last citation reads: *That person* הכרת תכרת (*hikkaret tikkaret*), *will surely be cut off*. The infinitive absolute form, *hikkaret*, is nearly identical with *hakkarat, the appearance of* [*their faces*]. The doublet, *hikkaret tikkaret*, may be associated here with the two images of *kaf, resh, tav* on this person's face.

On the verse in Isaiah, see JT *Yevamot* 16:3, 15c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:20; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 33:5; BT *Yevamot* 120a; *Zohar* 2:74b (*RR*); 3:123a (*RM*); *ZḤ* 72a–b (*ShS*); *TZ*, intro, 13b; *Sod Hakkarat Panim*, 298, 300; Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 250–51. Actually, the simple sense of the phrase *hakkarat peneihem* in Isaiah is probably *their partiality* [in judgment]; for the idiom, see Deuteronomy 1:17; 16:19.

122. **Seed of David is reversed…** Whereas others of this category appear to the wise right away in the form of an ox's face, those descended from David appear first in the form of a lion's face and then in the form of an ox's face. As indicated above (note 119), the ox is associated with harsh Judgment. Furthermore, different veins appear on the faces of these Davidic descendants, suggesting the letters ר (*resh*) and ע (*ayin*), which spell רע (*ra*), "evil."

123. **poised to be mended for mystery of the past…** This person has been reincarnated to mend his misdeeds in

an earlier lifetime. His spirit is weakened, and no letters appear on his face, having vanished previously. His face assumes the form of an eagle's face (the fourth image from the Chariot), visible only to the eyes of the wise.

On reincarnation in Kabbalah, see *Bahir* 135 (195); *Zohar* 1:131a, 186b, 239a; 2:91b, 94b–114a passim; 3:7a, 182b; *ZḤ* 59a–c; 89b (*MhN, Rut*); Scholem, *Major Trends*, 242–43; idem, *Kabbalah*, 344–50; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 197–250; idem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 298. On deciphering a person's past reincarnations from his face, see *Sod Hakkarat Panim*, 298. On the weakness of a reincarnated soul, see *Zohar* 1:239a. On the face of an eagle, see *ZḤ* 36c (*RR*).

124. **His secret…** How he can be recognized, since no letters appear on his face. Momentarily, he assumes the face of an eagle, glimpsed only by the wise.

125. ***I praise the dead…*** Apparently understood to mean: *I praise the dead, who have already died* and have no need of (further) reincarnation *more than the living, who are still alive* in reincarnated form.

The significance of the appearance of an eagle's face in Davidic descendants is kept secret.

On the verse in Ecclesiastes, see *Zohar* 1:187b, 188b; 2:105b; 3:182a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 144–45; *OY*. The biblical context (Ecclesiastes 4:2–3) reads: *I praise the dead, who have already died, more than the living, who are still alive. But better than both is one who has not yet been, who has not seen the evil deeds that are being done under the sun*.

126. **In a human spirit…** The spirit protrudes letters on a person's face corresponding to his character and behavior. See above at notes 105–22.

For most physiognomic features, the letters of the phrase זה ספר (*Zeh sefer*), *This is the book*, symbolize a person's character and behavior (see above at notes 76–104). However, the physiognomy of the face involves other

combinations of letters as well as the four faces from the Chariot. On *zeh sefer*, see above, notes 70–71, 76.

"Dominion of spirit or sinking of spirit" refers to a person's spiritual virtue or failure.

127. **mystery of the lips...** On the physiognomy of the lips, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:270 (English translation: 2:801); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, pp. 18–19; *Zohar* 2:74a (*RR*); *ZḤ* 36a.

The letters פ (*pe*) and ס (*samekh*) appear in the phrase ספר זה (*Zeh sefer*), *This is the book*. See above, notes 76, 81, 126. These two letters also suggest the Aramaic word for "lip," which can be spelled שיפתא (*sifta*) or סיפתא (*sifta*).

128. **gossip...the evil tongue...** Both of these render לישנא בישא (*lishshana bisha*), "evil tongue, evil speech, gossip, slander."

129. **פ (*pe*)...ר (*resh*)...ס (*samekh*)** All appearing in the phrase ספר זה (*Zeh sefer*), *This is the book*. See above, note 127.

130. **mouthed, not embodied** His words sound virtuous, but he does not act accordingly.

131. **severely shriveled...** Aramaic, עתיקין בעתיקו (*attiqin be-attiqu*), "old in oldness." For the connotation of "worn out, shriveled," see *Targum Yonatan*, Lamentations 3:4.

132. **If his beard is filled with hair...** On the physiognomy of the beard, see BT *Sanhedrin* 100b; Yassif, ed., *Sippurei Ben Sira*, 204–5; *TZ* 70, 132b. The *Idrot* of the *Zohar* (3:127b–145a [*IR*], 287b–296b [*IZ*]) feature detailed descriptions of the divine beard.

133. ***winking his eyes*** Signaling maliciously to others.

134. **פ (*pe*)...ס (*samekh*)...ר (*resh*)** See above, note 129.

135. **one whose ears...** On the physiognomy of the ears, see *Sod ha-Sodot*, ed. Gaster, 3:270 (English translation: 2:801); Ibn Zabara, *Sefer Sha'ashu'im* 2, p. 19; Gershon ben Solomon, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* 9, 29a; *Zohar* 2:74a (*RR*); *TZ* 70, 130a; Aldabi, *Shevilei Emunah* 4:1.

The letter י (*yod*) is the smallest letter, resembling a dot, the starting point of all letters. In Kabbalah it symbolizes the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*. It can also be construed as a miniature version of the letter ר (*resh*).

136. **other mysteries in letters of our Master…** Of our teacher, Rabbi Shim'on, relating to the verse זה ספר (*Zeh sefer*), *This is the book of, the generations of Adam*…. See above, notes 70–71, 76.

תקופין (*Tequfin*), "cycles," refers to solstices and equinoxes.

137. **They…** Rabbi Yitsḥak and Rabbi Yose. See above at note 69.

138. ***Human hands were under their wings…*** The wings of the *ḥayyot*, angelic "living beings" carrying the divine throne. See above, note 110.

According to BT *Pesaḥim* 119a, the image of the hands alludes to "the hand of the blessed Holy One, which is spread out under the wings of the *ḥayyot* to accept penitents." See *Zohar* 2:260b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 39b.

139. ***Hands*—forms and supernal mysteries…** The fingers and palms of the hand contain mysteries, as described below.

"Outwardly and inwardly" refer respectively to the fingernails and the fronts of the fingers adjoining the palm. On the symbolism of the ten fingers, see above, note 4.

140. **created the human…** Since the human being was created in the divine image, the entire human body—including the palms and fingers—contains supernal mysteries.

On the human being as a microcosm, see Plato, *Timaeus*, 44–47; *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 3; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 31; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:4; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 5:57–59; Donnolo, *Sefer Ḥakhmoni*, 63d–66b; Joseph ibn Ẓaddik, *Sefer ha-Olam ha-Qatan*; *Zohar* 1:90b, 134b, 186b; 2:23b.

On Adam as the creation of God's palm(s), see *Bereshit Rabbah* 24:5; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 3:11; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 40, 47. Cf. Genesis 2:7.

141. **Mystery of *kaf*, palm—of this letter called כף (*kaf*)...** Associating the word כף (*kaf*), "palm," with the letter כ (*kaf*). In fact, the name of this letter derives from its earliest form as a pictograph of the palm of the hand.

The letter *kaf* and the human palms (each branching into five fingers) allude to the ten *sefirot*, which are associated with the ten utterances by which the world was created—or the Ten Commandments, which were engraved five on the right tablet and five on the left.

On the ten utterances, see M *Avot* 5:1, "The world was created through ten utterances." See above, p. 152, n. 52; *Midrash Tadshe* 10 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:174). On the Ten Commandments, see below, note 305. On the relation between the two, see *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Deuteronomy 5:6; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 6:46; *Zohar* 3:11b–12a; below, note 608.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *Elohim created the human in His image; in the image of Elohim He created him, male and female He created them*.

142. ***I too will strike* כף (*kaf*), *palm*...** The divine right and left hands symbolize respectively *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. When these conflict, blessings vanish from the world—as happened when the Temple was captured and destroyed, and Israel's glory passed to other nations.

On "the glory of Israel" being given to other nations, see BT *Ḥagigah* 5b. The verse in Ezekiel reads: *I too will strike My palm against My palm, and I will satisfy My fury*.

143. **When they join as one...** When the two divine palms unite, they become one כף (*kaf*), "palm" (or "ladle") with ten fingers (corresponding to *ten shekels* and symbolizing all ten *sefirot*). The flow of emanation eventually generates the human being.

The first reference to *Elohim* (in the verse from Genesis) alludes to *Binah*. "Ascending in thought" may refer to the union of *Binah* and *Ḥokhmah*. The phrase את האדם (*et ha-adam*), *the human*, alludes to the androgynous divine entity,

including *Tif'eret* (and the *sefirot* surrounding Him) and *Shekhinah*. In this phrase the term *adam* by itself may refer to this entity (see above, note 71); or alternatively, את (*et*) refers to *Shekhinah* (see above, p. 366, n. 586), and *adam* refers to *Tif'eret* and the *sefirot* surrounding Him. Finally, *in the image of Elohim* alludes to *Shekhinah* (*Binah*'s daughter and reflection), who generates the human soul. She, apparently, is "another palm," in addition to the right and left divine palms.

See *OY*; *MmD*; below, note 147. For another interpretation of "another palm," see Galante. On the association of *ten shekels* with ten fingers, see *Midrash Tadshe* 10 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:174). On the symbolism of the ten fingers, see above, note 4. For the full verse in Genesis, see above, end of note 141. On the phrase "ascending in thought," see BT *Menaḥot* 29b.

144. ***You clothed me in skin and flesh…*** Implying that the essential human being is distinct from *skin and flesh*. This human essence—the soul—is temporarily clothed in bodily garments, which are stripped away at death.

See *Zohar* 1:20b; *ZḤ* 78c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 44, 159; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 28–30 (33–36); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:680. The verse in Job concludes: *wove me of bones and sinews*.

145. **skin in which a person is clothed…** Human skin symbolizes the *reddened ram skins and tanned-leather skins* that covered the curtains of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, while the flesh beneath the skin symbolizes the curtains themselves. (See Exodus 25:5; 26:14.) The *skins* and curtains of the Tabernacle symbolize respectively the outer (lower) layer of heaven and the inner (higher) layers of heaven. The phrase "the garments above covering the garment" refers to the *skins* covering the curtains.

See *Zohar* 2:70b (*RR*), 233b; 3:170a. "Our Master" refers to Rabbi Shim'on.

146. **Bones and sinews...** These correspond to heavenly chariots and angelic forces, which clothe the androgynous divine *human* (see above, note 143). In the human being below, the soul is the essence of the human (see above, note 144), clothed in skin, flesh, bones, and sinews. The flesh covers the bones and sinews (which represent the chariots and angelic camps); this covering of flesh is linked with demonic forces, just as demonic shells cover the holy kernel. The skin corresponds to the outermost heavens (see above, note 145).

See *Zohar* 2:70b (*RR*); 3:170a. The clause "this is the mystery conveyed to the Other Side" apparently alludes to the notion that the Angel of Death rules over the flesh (not over the soul). Elsewhere this is linked with the idea that the flesh of sacrifices is offered to the demonic power. See *Zohar* 1:64b–65a; 2:269a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:890–95. On the more general theme of providing a portion to the demonic power in order to occupy and assuage him, see above, p. 140, n. 13.

147. **twice here *Elohim*... male...female...** The first *Elohim* refers to *Binah*. Although She is often pictured as the Divine Mother, She is also known as World of the Male, encompassing all the *sefirot* beneath Her through *Yesod*. Together these constitute a masculine entity that joins *Shekhinah*. The second *Elohim* refers to *Shekhinah*, the female. The human being was fashioned in the image of both.

On *Binah* as World of the Male, see *Zohar* 1:96a, 147a–b, 149a, 160b, 200a, 246a–247a, 248b; 2:101a, 105b, 127b, 165b; *ZḤ* 72b (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 343; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 23 (and Wolfson's note 6); idem, Commentary on the Ten *Sefirot*, 375b; Scholem, *Le-Ḥeqer Qabbalat R. Yitsḥaq ben Ya'aqov ha-Kohen*, 66–67. Cf. *Zohar* 1:5b, 17b, 46b, 163a; 2:4a.

148. **In the heaven covering all...** In the outermost layer of heaven, patterns formed by stars and constellations reveal to astrologers secrets and future events. Similarly,

impressions appearing in the human skin reveal to the wise a person's character, behavior, and fate. See Margolin, "Ḥokhmat ha-Partsuf," 217–23.

149. **Gazing at the face…** As discussed above at notes 105–126. Just as astrologers can read the stars, so the wise can decipher the impressions in the face. And just as clouds obscure the signs of heaven, so anger obscures and transforms facial signs. In such circumstances, however, the wise (unlike the astrologers) are provided an alternative method: gazing at the impressions and lines in the hand—although this method is not as accurate as gazing at the face.

150. **Lines of hands and lines of fingers…** These lines reveal secrets, similar to astrological signs. "Inside" refers to the fronts of the fingers adjoining the palm (as opposed to the backs of the fingers and the fingernails). See above, note 139.

On chiromancy (determining temperament, character, and fate from lines and other marks in the palm and fingers), see *TZ* 70, 132b–133b; Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 246–305; idem, *Kabbalah*, 317–19; above, note 76. For a chiromantic interpretation of gazing at the hands during *havdalah*, see *Sha'arei Teshuvah (Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim)*, 104; *Kol Bo*, 41.

151. **Fingers stand in supernal mysteries…** The ten fingers symbolize the ten *sefirot*, while the nails covering the fingers symbolize lower powers, controlled by the *sefirot* (or specifically, by *Shekhinah*). Sorcerers can decipher signs on the fingernails through the holy power illumining those nails, but in doing so, the sorcerers defile them.

On the symbolism of the ten fingers, see above, note 4. On the fingernails, see *Zohar* 1:20b–21a (Vol. 1, p. 159, n. 404); 2:208a–b, 172b; 3:79–b; Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi, *Peirush Qabbali li-Vreshit Rabbah*, 243–44; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 219–22. Cf. BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 18a.

152. **fine white stars shine…** White spots under the surface of the fingernail.

The medical term for white discoloration of the fingernails is leukonychia. On the image of lentils, see *ZḤ* 35b (*RR*); the Indian text *Re'iyyat ha-Yadayim*, transmitted by Menaḥem Recanati and published by Scholem in *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 293; Alexander, "Incantations and Books of Magic," 365.

153. **Hands in supernal mysteries…** A list of various topics to be discussed, ending with the small finger of the right hand, whose lines and markings predict the success or failure of journeying on the road.

154. **lines, formed when the finger is folded…** Corresponding to the finger joints. These lines, reflecting the basic structure of the hand, do not indicate anything special unless they are increased. See *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, fig. 1.

"When he pulls the skin back" apparently refers either to pulling the skin tight from behind the finger or to stretching the skin by opening the folded finger and pulling it back. See *OY*; *MmD*.

The letter ז (*zayin*) appears in the phrase זה ספר (*Zeh sefer*), *This is the book*. See above, notes 76, 81, 126.

155. **ז (*zayin*) that is simple** Perhaps meaning one of the "twelve simple letters," as opposed to the "seven double letters" (pronounced in two ways). See *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:2.

156. **middle finger… stands poised to realize the action…** Its lines predict whether the person will actualize what he is thinking.

On the middle finger, see *Zohar* 3:186a–b. On stretching back the skin, see above, note 154.

157. **beard and eyebrows are red…** On the evil connotations of this color, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:8; above, note 113.

158. **according to a person's conduct, lines change…** The condition of the divine being (known as *adam*,

human, "the human within") is reflected in the stars of heaven, sometimes manifesting Judgment, sometimes Compassion. Similarly below, a person's changing condition and conduct are reflected in the lines of his skin, which resembles heaven, covering all. See *MmD*; for a somewhat different interpretation, see *OY*.

On the letter ז (*zayin*), see above, note 154. The letter י (*yod*) is included in the fully spelled-out name of the letter זין (*zayin*). According to another interpretation, the י (*yod*) resembles the head of the letter ז (*zayin*). See above, note 82. The *yod*, smallest of letters, alludes to the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom), or divine thought, which corresponds to human thought, indicated by the middle finger.

On the changing lines of the skin, see *Zohar* 2:70b–71a (*RR*); Margolin, "Ḥokhmat ha-Partsuf," 223–24. On the divine *adam*, see above, notes 71, 143. On skin corresponding to heaven, see above, notes 145–46, 148. On manifesting Judgment and Compassion, see *Zohar* 3:129a, 134a, 140a (all *IR*); Scholem. The full verse in Isaiah, referring to the stars, reads: *Lift your eyes on high and see: Who created these? The one who brings forth their array by number and calls them each by name: because of His great might and vast power, not one is missing*.

159. **mysteries we have learned from our Master…** From Rabbi Shim'on. See above at notes 69, 75, 81, 109, 136, 145.

Rav Yeiva Sava (the Elder) is a minor figure in the Babylonian Talmud who assumes a prominent role in the *Zohar*, culminating in *Sava de-Mishpatim* (2:94b–114a), where he appears as a donkey-driver who turns out to be a master of wisdom. The *Zohar* frequently cites *The Book of Rav Yeiva Sava*.

On Rav Yeiva, see BT *Pesaḥim* 103b, *Bava Qamma* 49b, *Ḥullin* 86b; *Zohar* 1:47b, 79b, 117b, 225a, 226a; 2:6a, 60b, 206b; 3:7b, 155b, 289a (*IZ*), 290a (*IZ*), 295a (*IZ*).

160. **other lines, all called תולדות (*toledot*), *generations*...** Lines in the palm, revealing a person's nature, character, and fate, analogous to the signs of heaven.

On the significance of the term תולדות (*toledot*), see above, note 76. On Genesis 5:1, see also notes 70–71. Genesis 5:1 reads: *This is the book of the generations of* אדם (*adam*), *Adam* [or: *the human, humankind*]*: On the day of God's creating adam, a human, in the image of God He made him*. Genesis 2:4 reads: *These are the generations of heaven and earth when they were created*....

161. **זה ספר (*Zeh sefer*), *This is the book of*...** The first mnemonic—ז-ר ה-פ-ץ (*Zayin, resh, he, pe*, final *tsadi*)—consists of the letters of this biblical phrase, except for the substitution of ץ (final *tsadi*) for ס (*samekh*). The second mnemonic—ה-ס-ף ז-ר (*resh, zayin, he, samekh*, final *pe*)—consists purely of the letters of this phrase.

See below at note 174. Cf. the mnemonic in *Zohar* 2:71a (*RR*); *ZḤ* 37b: ז-ר-ה פ-ס-ץ (*Zayin, resh, he, pe, samekh*, final *tsadi*).

162. **First gate: ר (*resh*)...ה (*he*)...ז (*zayin*)...** The first three letters of the mnemonic ר-ז ה-ס-ף (*resh, zayin, he, samekh*, final *pe*). See the preceding note; *OY*; and for a depiction of these lines in the palm, ibid., 273, fig. 2.

163. **The right grasps one thin line...** See *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, figs. 3–4.

164. **three small lines appear...** See *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, fig. 5.

165. **Second gate: ז (*zayin*)...** The second letter of the mnemonic ר-ז ה-ס-ף (*resh, zayin, he, samekh*, final *pe*). See above, note 161. "Right" means the right hand.

166. **In a castle of absorption...** A typically cryptic line, referring here to the palm—which receives, or absorbs, lines and impressions.

"Castle" renders קסטירו (*qastiru*), apparently deriving from Latin *castrum* (pl. *castra*), "castle, fortress, military camp." "Absorption" renders קולטא (*qulta*), apparently based on the root קלט (*qlt*), "to retain, absorb." For various interpretations, see *OY*; *NO*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qisra; Sullam; MmD*.

167. **three large lines appear...** See *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, figs. 6–7. The phrase "defect in his seed" refers to a sexual sin committed by an ancestor.

168. **two lines lengthwise are connected with the widthwise...** See *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, fig. 8.

169. **if one disqualifies his seed...** Through sexual sin.

On the theme of "three generations," see Deuteronomy 23:9, according to which the *third generation* (i.e., the grandchildren) of Edomites and Egyptians living among Israelites may be admitted *into the assembly of YHVH*. See M *Yevamot* 8:3; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 252; BT *Shabbat* 146a; *ZḤ* 82b (*MhN, Rut*).

See BT *Qiddushin* 70a: “Woe to him who disqualifies his seed, blemishes his family, and marries a woman who is not fitting for him! Elijah binds him, and the blessed Holy One lashes him.” See *Zohar* 3:90a, 237a; Moses de León, *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, par. 58.

170. **Third gate: ה (*he*), in the right…** The third letter of the mnemonic ר-ז ה-ס-ף (*resh, zayin, he, samekh*, final *pe*). See above, note 161. “Right” means the right hand.

Although Rabbi Yitsḥak and Rabbi Yose had mentioned five gates corresponding to five letters (above at note 161), only three of these gates are described here. However, the fourth and fifth letters—ס (*samekh*) and פ (*pe*)—do appear below as part of the third gate.

On these lines in the palm, see *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, fig. 9. “Outside his house, not so” means that outside, this person is not stingy or hungry.

171. **four lines widthwise and five lengthwise…** See *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, fig. 10.

172. **one black mark…** See *ZḤ* 35b, 36d–37a.

173. **left hand has three lines lengthwise and three widthwise…** See *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, fig. 11.

On sexual relations with a menstruant, see Leviticus 15:19–24; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:948–53; above, pp. 9–10 and nn. 36–37. For a physiognomic indication of lying with a menstruant, see *ZḤ* 35b (*RR*).

174. **letter ס (*samekh*)… substituted by the letter ץ (final *tsadi*)…** See above, note 161. The concluding word לנפשך (*le-nafshakh*) can mean “yourself” or “your soul.”

175. **three lines lengthwise and one widthwise…** See *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, fig. 12.

“This does not leave him” refers to adultery. On sunken eyes, see above at notes 96, 120. “Speaks with [the eyes]” refers to winking or gesturing.

176. **If he returns to his Lord, lines change…** See *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, figs. 13–14.

“Those two” refers to the two lines lengthwise that change into two widthwise. On clinging to one’s wife, see Genesis 2:24: *Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh*.

177. **one line lengthwise and four widthwise…** See *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, fig. 15.

“Streaks” renders the neologism קסירין (*qesirin*), whose meaning is unclear. For various interpretations, see *OY* and *Sullam* (“marks”); *DE* and *MmD* (“sinews”). Cf. Vol. 3, p. 196, n. 110.

“And fulfills” means that he carries out his threat without having to speak. Red is a demonic color. On a ruddy murderer, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:8; *Hakkarat Panim le-Rabbi Yishma’el*, 286 (and Scholem’s note 147).

178. **four lengthwise and three widthwise…** See *OY*; and for a depiction, ibid., 273, fig. 16.

On the verse in Isaiah, see BT *Berakhot* 34b: “Rabbi Abbahu said, ‘In the place where masters of return [i.e., penitents] stand, the completely righteous do not stand, as is said: *Peace, peace to the far and the near—to the far* first, and then *to the near* [i.e., God offers peace first to one who had sinned and was *far*, and only afterward to one who was completely righteous and always *near*].’ But Rabbi Yoḥanan would say to you, ‘What is *the far*? One who from the beginning was far from transgression [i.e., completely righteous]. And what is *the near*? One who was *near* to transgression and has now moved far from it.’”

179. **mysteries of *the generations of adam*…** Marks, lines, and impressions generated by a person’s conduct and character. See above, note 76; *Zohar* 2:70b (*RR*).

“Our Master” refers to Rabbi Shim’on, with whom Rabbi Yitsḥak and Rabbi Yose have been speaking. See above, notes 69, 159.

180. **who are not baffled by any mysteries…** This expression derives from Daniel 4:6. אניס (*Aneis*), “baffles,”

means literally “oppresses, constrains,” implying “overwhelms, intimidates, baffles.”

181. תחזה **(*teḥezeh*), *you shall behold*…** Jethro advises his son-in-law, Moses, how to administer justice: *As for you*, תחזה (*teḥezeh*), *you shall behold* [or: *perceive, discern, select*], *from all the people men of caliber, revering God, men of truth, hating bribery, and you shall set chiefs of thousands, chiefs of hundreds, chiefs of fifties, and chiefs of tens over them. And they shall judge the people at all times, and so, every great matter they shall bring to you, and every small matter they themselves shall judge, and it will be lighter on you and they will bear it with you* (Exodus 18:21–22).

Rabbi Shim’on wonders why Scripture employs the verb *teḥezeh*, literally *you shall behold*, rather than תבחר (*tivḥar*), *you shall choose*. He explains that *teḥezeh* implies how these judges should be selected: by observing physical features, based on principles of physiognomy.

See above, note 76; *Zohar* 2:70a–b (*RR*); *ZḤ* 31a; *TZ* 70, 121b–122b; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 18:21. Cf. *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Yitro*) 2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 18:21.

Earlier (above at note 76), Rabbi Yitsḥak and Rabbi Yose had specified seven human features (hair, forehead, eyes, face, lips, ears, lines of the hands). Apparently, the six features mentioned here do not include the ears, which were only touched upon (above at note 135). See *DE*. Cf. *Zohar* 2:70a–b (*RR*), where Rabbi Shim’on lists these six features: hair, eyes, nose, lips, face, hands.

182. ***Revering God*—four, by the eyes…** Reverence or the lack thereof can be determined by whether a person’s eyes look humbly downward or haughtily above. Truth (or falsehood) is spoken with the lips. Bribes are taken by hand.

183. **Moses did not need this…** He did not need to *behold* bodily signs and features (as Jethro had suggested); rather he *chose men of caliber* based solely on inspiration.

Exodus 18:16 reads: *When they have some matter*, אלי בא (*ba elai*), *it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his fellow, and I make known the laws of God and His teachings*. The singular form *ba* may mean *it* [i.e., the matter] *comes*, or *he* [i.e., one of the litigants] *comes*, or *they* [construing *ba* collectively] *come*. Rabbi Shim'on interprets the singular form as referring to Holy Spirit, or *Shekhinah*, who came to Moses and inspired him to select *men of caliber* instantly.

Cf. *Zohar* 2:70a (*RR*), where Rabbi Shim'on teaches that *Shekhinah* Herself saw and selected the judges. On the meaning of the verb ba in this verse, see *Targum Onqelos, Targum Yerushalmi*, Rashi, and Rashbam, ad loc.; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 18:16, n. 105.

184. **King Solomon, by the throne…** He determined who was telling the truth by relying not on witnesses but on the potent images on his miraculous throne. Consequently, all who approached his throne spoke truly.

According to a rabbinic tradition, Solomon sought to judge cases without witnesses, based solely on his mental powers, but he was instructed by the prophetic spirit to follow the procedure outlined in the Torah and base his legal decisions on testimony. See Deuteronomy 19:15; *Targum Yonatan*, Ecclesiastes 12:10; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b; Naḥmanides, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:163.

On the Holy Spirit appearing in Solomon's court, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 85:12; BT *Makkot* 23b; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 10:16; *Midrash Tehillim* 72:2.

On Solomon's glorious throne, its resemblance to the divine throne, and its images (of animals and biblical heroes), see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:7; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:10 (on 1:1); *Ester Rabbah* 1:12; *Targum Sheni*, Esther 1:2; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:17; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:83–85; 5:34–37; *Zohar* 1:243a, 247b; 2:14b (*MhN*); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 4:157–60; 6:296–97, nn. 69–70. On the images of animals on the divine throne, see Ezekiel 1:10;

Zohar 1:243a, 247b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 308.

185. **King Messiah, by smell…** The Messiah will judge humanity by his sense of smell, heightened *by awe of YHVH*. He will not need to judge *by sight of his eyes* (i.e., by observing bodily signs and features), nor by listening to witnesses, as implied by the conclusion of the verse: *nor by hearing of his ears will he decide*.

See BT *Sanhedrin* 93b; *Zohar* 2:213b. On determining by the sense of smell, see *Zohar* 3:186a, 188a; *ZḤ* 90c–d (*MhN, Rut*).

186. **These three judged…** Only Moses, Solomon, and the Messiah judge(d) the world without formal legal procedures.

"Warning" refers to the warning given by witnesses to the offender immediately before he commits the offense. On Solomon judging "without witnesses or warning," see *Midrash Tehillim* 72:2.

187. **providing remedy for people and healing their souls…** By guiding them to repent of the sins that have manifested themselves in these bodily signs.

See above at notes 158, 174; Margolin, "Ḥokhmat ha-Partsuf," 223–24, 242–43. *OY* interprets נפשייהו (*nafshaihu*), "their souls," as "their own souls," that is, the souls of the wise themselves.

188. ***third new moon*… ruled by Uriel…** The third of the four archangels (Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael). Each myriad of angelic camps has one of the 365 keys of light, opening channels by which the supernal light flows down from above.

The unique term חשמל (*ḥashmal*) derives from Ezekiel's vision of the chariot-throne: Ezekiel 1:4: *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming from the north, a great cloud and flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it; and from within it, like the color of ḥashmal, from within the fire*. The precise meaning of the term is unclear, but the context indicates a

bright substance. It has been rendered *amber, gleaming amber, glowing metal*. In postbiblical literature it was regarded as endowed with holy and dangerous properties. See BT *Ḥagigah* 13a. Here, *ḥashmal* may symbolize *Tif'eret*, who is associated with the four letters of the name *YHVH*.

On Uriel, see Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 5–10. For various interpretations of *ḥashmal*, see *OY*; Galante; *Yahel Or*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:648; *MmD*. Cf. above, note 53.

189. ***man of completion…*** *Tif'eret* is symbolized by both Jacob and Moses, each of whom united with *Shekhinah*.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *The boys grew up. Esau became a skilled hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was* איש תם (*ish tam*), *a simple man, dwelling in tents*. The word *tam* means "simple, innocent, plain, mild, quiet, sound, wholesome, complete, perfect." *Targum Onqelos*, ad loc., renders it: שלים (*shelim*), "complete, perfect, consummate." Here, the *Zohar* understands the phrase as *man of tam*—namely, of *Shekhinah*, who is the "completion" or "consummation" of the flow of emanation. Jacob, who symbolizes *Tif'eret*, is Her *man* or "husband," "master of the [divine] house."

Similarly, Moses is described as איש האלהים (*ish ha-elohim*), *man of God* (Deuteronomy 33:1; Psalms 90:1). This title is understood midrashically as "husband of God" (able to command Him) and kabbalistically as "husband of *Shekhinah*" (united with Her).

Shekhinah is also symbolized by the knot of the tefillin that appears at the back of the head. According to rabbinic tradition, when Moses asked to see the divine glory and God replied, *You will see My back* (Exodus 33:23), He was referring to this knot of the divine tefillin, which He then showed to Moses. See BT *Berakhot* 7a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on the Ḥasid.

On Jacob as *ish tam*, see *Zohar* 1:146a, 167b, 222a; 2:175b; 3:12b, 163b. On "master of the house" (applied to

both Jacob and Moses), see *Zohar* 1:21b, 138b, 152b, 236b, 239a; 2:22b, 235b, 238b, 244b (*Heikh*); 3:163b. Cf. 2:99b. See Numbers 12:7: *Not so My servant Moses, in all My house he is trusted*.

On Moses as *ish ha-elohim*, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana, nispaḥim, Vezot Haberakhah*, 443–44, 448 (variants); *Tanḥuma, Vezot Haberakhah* 2 (*Ets Yosef*, ad loc.); *Devarim Rabbah* (Lieberman) on 33:1; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:5; *Zohar* 1:6b, 21b–22a, 148a, 152a–b, 192b, 236b; 239a; 2:22b, 235b, 238b, 244b (*Heikh*); 3:261b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 25; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 101–2 (129).

According to rabbinic tradition, after encountering God on Mount Sinai, Moses abstained from sexual contact with his wife and maintained union with *Shekhinah*. See *Sifrei*, Numbers 99; BT *Shabbat* 87a; *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10; *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 13; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 7:6; *Zohar* 1:22a, 152b, 234b; 2:222a; 3:148a, 180a, 261b; *ZḤ* 59b, 72d (*ShS*).

190. **In his image…** In *Tif'eret*, the divine image of Jacob, abides the mystery of *ḥashmal* (see above, note 188). The angelic camps of Uriel (who corresponds to *Tif'eret*) convey this light below.

191. **That light is comprised of two lights…** The light of *Tif'eret* blends the lights of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. The first of these is the primordial light, treasured away for the righteous in the world-to-come. The second is colored red, symbolizing the quality of *Din* (Judgment).

On the primordial light, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:7: "Rabbi Yehudah son of Rabbi Simon said, 'With the light created by the blessed Holy One on the first day, one could gaze and see from one end of the universe to the other. When the Holy One foresaw the corruption of the generation of Enosh and the generation of the Flood, He hid it away from them, as is written: *The light of the wicked is withheld* (Job 38:15). Where did He hide it? In the

Garden of Eden. *Light is sown for the righteous, joy for the upright in heart* (Psalms 97:11).’”

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:6; 41:3; BT *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Shemot Rabbah 35:1; Tanḥuma, Shemini*, 9; *Bahir* 97–98 (147); *Zohar* 1:7a, 31b–32a, 45b–46a, 47a, 59a, 131a, 203b; 2:35a, 127a, 148b–149a, 220a–b; 3:88a, 173b. On the generation of Enosh, see Vol. 3, p. 248, n. 408.

192. **that light… is called Twins…** This double light is appropriately called Twins, and the third month (corresponding to Uriel) is ruled by the constellation Gemini (which means Twins). The Torah was given in this month (Sivan); and Torah itself is a pair of twins, comprising Written Torah and Oral Torah.

From the divine realm, rungs extend below to the heavenly constellations, each assigned a name and each ordained to conduct the terrestrial world.

On the Torah being given in Gemini, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:20; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 13; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 19:1, nn. 7–7*.

193. **None of the other constellations…** Apparently based on *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20. As several commentators note, Gemini is not the only constellation depicted in human form.

Day often symbolizes *Tif’eret* (associated with Written Torah), while *night* symbolizes *Shekhinah* (associated with Oral Torah and mouth). The phrase “in all, attaining Twins” may mean here “in all ways, attaining Twins,” that is, whether the Twins are pictured as *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, or *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*.

194. תומים **(*tomim*), *twins, in her womb…*** According to the simple sense of this verse, *twins* refers to both Esau and Jacob, issuing from Rebekah’s womb. However, for the *Zohar*, the word describes Jacob alone, who attained the twin rung of *Tif’eret*, which combines the lights of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*.

Because Jacob shared Rebekah's womb with the wicked Esau, the word for *twins* is spelled here deficiently: תומים (*tomim*), rather than תאומים (*te'omim*)—lacking the א (*alef*), whose numerical value of one signifies unity and perfection. Esau's presence threatened the unity.

"All is one mystery" apparently means "whether spelled with or without the א (*alef*), the word applies to Jacob." Actually, in the Masoretic text the word is spelled תומם (*tomim*), without either the י (*yod*) or the א (*alef*). See *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:8; 85:13 (and Theodor's notes); Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Genesis 25:24, n. 123; 38:27, n. 122.

195. **Jacob obtained... two months...** The three consecutive months Nisan, Iyyar, and Sivan symbolize Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (and their corresponding *sefirot*: *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*). Jacob synthesized the qualities (and months) of both Abraham and Isaac, so his month (Sivan) is ruled by Gemini (Twins). Esau, who strayed to the demonic realm, obtained only the next two months, Tammuz and Av; lacking the balance of the third month (Elul), he is unstable and his dominion transitory.

The months of Tammuz and Av are ominous months in the Jewish calendar. Traditionally, on the seventeenth day of Tammuz the walls of Jerusalem were breached by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.E. and Titus in 70 C.E. In each instance, three weeks later (on the ninth of Av) the Temple was destroyed. The month of Elul, preceding the New Year, is a time for reconciliation with God and thus does not belong to Esau.

On good and bad months, see *Zohar* 2:12a; 3:259a; *ZḤ* 36d (*RR*), 92d (*MhN, Eikhah*). The verse in Psalms concludes: *You have torn down their cities; the very memory of them has perished*.

196. **Since Jacob is Twins...** Since he symbolizes *Tif'eret* (who is known as Twins because He combines the two aspects of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*), Torah was given to Israel in the third month (Sivan), which is ruled by Gemini (Twins) and

combines the qualities of the two preceding months (Nisan and Iyyar).

197. **In the third month…** The Torah was given in the month of Sivan, to a nation composed of priests, Levites, and Israelites, who symbolize respectively the triple rungs of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. The Torah itself is triple, comprising Pentateuch, Prophets, and Writings.

These triple formulations are based on rabbinic models. See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:13; BT *Shabbat* 88a; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 8; *Midrash Mishlei* 22.

198. **blessed Holy One gathered the seed…** God examined all the generations of Israel, from Abraham until those who stood at Mount Sinai.

199. **by love of the patriarchs…** Apparently, by telling the Israelites of God's love for the patriarchs. (Alternatively, by the merit of the patriarchs' love of God.)

"By the love that I have shown them…" refers to the loving deeds and miracles that God performed for the Israelites in delivering them from Egypt and saving them at the Red Sea.

"Respond with these words" refers to the words of God conveyed by Moses in Exodus 19:4–6.

200. ***Moses went up to Elohim…*** According to midrashic tradition, at Sinai God bent the heavens so that they touched the top of the mountain and the Divine Glory appeared there, calling to Moses, and he *went up to Elohim*.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 4, 9. The verse in Exodus concludes: *and YHVH called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and tell the Children of Israel."* The verse in Psalms concludes: *a dense cloud beneath His feet*.

201. **As long as engravings…** As long as the *sefirot* emanate evenly, joy and fulfillment abound.

The full verse reads: *He said, "Look, I am about to seal a covenant. Before all your people I will do wonders that*

have not been created in all the earth and in all the nations, and all the people in whose midst you are shall see YHVH's deeds—how awesome they are—that which I do with you."

202. ***awesome…*** **Completeness of all…** *Awesome* alludes to *Tif'eret*, who balances and completes the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. In the verse from Deuteronomy, the adjectives *great, mighty, and awesome* refer respectively to *Ḥesed*—also known as *Gedullah* (Greatness)—*Gevurah* (Might), and *Tif'eret*. Jacob, who symbolizes *Tif'eret*, is called איש תם (*ish tam*), *a simple man*, which is rendered by *Targum Onqelos* as גבר שלים (*gevar shelim*), "a complete man." Similarly God's deeds, generated through a balance of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, are complete.

On the verse in Deuteronomy, see *Zohar* 1:19a; 2:261a (*Heikh*); 3:274a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 81. On the association between Jacob and *awesome*, see Genesis 28:17, quoted below. On the phrase *ish tam*, see above, note 189.

203. **Rabbi Yehudah Sava** Rabbi Yehudah the Elder. This title reappears in *Zohar* 1:226b.

204. ***He was awestruck…*** Jacob's reaction upon waking from his revelatory dream. The verse concludes: *"This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"*

205. **completeness of holy faith…** ***awesome*** Rabbi Yehudah Sava explains that Jacob perceived the completeness of the sefirotic realm ("holy faith") appearing in *Tif'eret*, which balances right and left. This completeness, characteristic of *Tif'eret*, is called *awesome*. See above, note 202.

206. **why is it translated 'awe'…** *Targum Onqelos* on this verse renders מה נורא (*mah nora*), *How awesome*, as דחילו מה (*mah deḥilu*), literally, "what awe." Rabbi Yose wonders why the Aramaic translation does not read instead מה שלים (*mah shelim*), "how complete," thereby conveying the inner meaning of Jacob's exclamation. He apparently has in mind

Targum Onqelos's rendering of איש תם (*ish tam*), *a simple man*, as גבר שלים (*gevar shelim*), "a complete man," mentioned above, note 202.

207. ***Who has gone up to heaven?...*** **This is Moses...** This and the following interpretations of the verse in Proverbs derive from rabbinic sources. See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:4; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 5; *Tanḥuma, Naso* 24; *Midrash Mishlei* 30:4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:11; *Zohar* 2:197a–b.

208. ***a double handful...*** From the description of the atonement ritual performed by Aaron.

209. ***There will be no dew...*** Elijah's oath to King Ahab.

210. **בהבראם (*be-hibbare'am*), *when they were created...*** According to Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Korḥah (*Bereshit Rabbah* 12:9), the word בהבראם (*be-hibbare'am*), *when they were created*, is an anagram of באברהם (*be-Avraham*), "through Abraham," indicating that *heaven and earth* were created for his sake.

See *Zohar* 1:3b, 86b, 91b, 93a, 105b, 128b, 154b, 230b, 247a; 2:31a, 48b, 220b; 3:117a. Cf. 1:46a.

211. ***Who has gone up to heaven...*** **blessed Holy One...** See above, note 207.

212. רוח **(*ruaḥ*)...** Meaning "wind, breath, spirit."

213. ***on the day that YHVH Elohim made earth and heaven*** The full verse reads: *These are the generations of heaven and earth when they were created, on the day that YHVH Elohim made earth and heaven*.

214. ***Who has gone up to heaven?...*** **four bonds of the world...** According to Rabbi Yose, this verse refers to the four elements: fire, air, water, and earth. The verse reads: *Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in the hollow of his hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of earth?* The phrase *who has gone up to*

heaven alludes to fire, while *wind, waters*, and *earth* indicate the other three elements.

The theory of the four elements was introduced by Empedocles and adopted by Plato, Aristotle, and most of their successors. It dominated Western cosmology until the Renaissance. According to this theory, everything below the sphere of the moon is composed of fire, air, water, and earth, all of which interact and are capable of transforming into one another. In the *Zohar,* water, fire, air, and earth often symbolize the four *sefirot Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret,* and *Shekhinah*.

See Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* 2:1–8; *Sefer Yetsirah* 3:3–4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:10–11; 4:1–6; *Zohar* 1:5b, 80a (*ST*); 2:13b, 23b; 3:170a.

215. **Rabbi Yose's words are unsustainable** His three different interpretations seem incompatible.

216. **Then he asked him...** Rabbi Shim'on asked Rabbi Yose.

217. **Rav Hamnuna Sava** Historically, Rav Hamnuna Sava (the Elder) was a mid-third-century Babylonian teacher, but in the *Zohar* he is a contemporary of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai (who lived in the second century). In the Talmud, Rav Hamnuna occasionally transmits teachings of Rabbi Shim'on (e.g., BT *Ḥullin* 21a, *Temurah* 15a), and several prayers are attributed to him (BT *Berakhot* 11b, 17a, 58a). In the *Zohar* roles are reversed and Rabbi Shim'on cites Rav Hamnuna. Throughout the *Zohar*, Hamnuna is greatly revered, and several original ritual acts are attributed to him. The Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava is cited frequently. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:60; Vol. 1, pp. 37–38, n. 257; above, p. 231 and n. 120.

218. **Concerning what Rabbi Yose said...** Again, Rabbi Yeisa points out the incompatibility of Rabbi Yose's three interpretations of the verse in Proverbs. See above at note 215.

219. **all those words fulfilled in the blessed Holy One…** All of Rabbi Yose's interpretations pertain to the divine realm. First (above at notes 207–10), he applied the verse to various biblical heroes, who correspond to specific *sefirot*: Moses to *Tif'eret*, Aaron and Abraham to *Ḥesed*, Elijah to *Yesod*. Then (above at notes 211–13), he applied the verse directly to God. Finally, he applied the verse to the four elements, which correspond to specific *sefirot* (see above, note 214).

For various interpretations, see *OY*; *Yahel Or*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

220. **Rabbi Yeisa was excited…** He recalls that previously Rabbi Shim'on taught him the deeper meaning of the verse in Genesis, applying it to Abraham and linking it to the verse in Psalms. Abraham symbolizes *Ḥesed* (*love*), and both verses imply that the world is based on this divine quality.

The declaration in Psalms—עולם חסד יבנה (*olam ḥesed yibbaneh*)—is usually understood to mean *Forever is love established*, but here Rabbi Yeisa (quoting Rabbi Shim'on) offers a midrashic reading with a kabbalistic twist: *The world is built on love*, namely, on the *sefirah* of *Ḥesed*.

Rabbi Yeisa's concluding words ("But all is fine!") apparently mean that he now understands how all of Rabbi Yose's words cohere and pertain to the divine realm. See the preceding note.

On *be-hibbare'am*, see above, note 210. On the verse in Psalms, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 9; *Sifra, Qedoshim* 10:11, 92d; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 4; JT *Yevamot* 11:1, 11d; BT *Sanhedrin* 58b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 21; *Midrash Tehillim* 89:2; *Zohar* 1:230b; 2:166b; 3:77a, 133b (*IR*), 145b, 259b. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; Vol. 3, pp. 392–93, n. 453.

221. ***What is his name?*—granted…** Rabbi Yeisa realizes that *his name* refers to the divine name; but how is one to interpret *what is his son's name?*

222. **I will repeat it** אהדרנא (*Ahadarna*), following the manuscripts O2 and O17. Other manuscripts, *OY*, and the printed editions read: אדכרנא (*adkarna*), "I remember," perhaps referring to Rabbi Yeisa's recall of Rabbi Shim'on's teaching on בהבראם (*be-hibbare'am*), *when they were created* (above at note 220). Conceivably, his statement could be rendered: "Certainly, for [what I learn] by day, I remember [as opposed to what I learn in a dream]." For various interpretations, see MM; Soncino; *MmD*; Berg, *The Zohar*.

223. ***My son, My firstborn, is Israel…*** The *son* is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel), son of *Ḥokhmah*. The verse in Isaiah reads: *You are My servant, Israel, in whom* אתפאר (*etpa'ar*), *I glory*. This final word alludes to its cognate noun, תפארת (*Tif'eret*).

Thus, the verse in Proverbs refers to *his name* (the name of *Ḥokhmah*) and *his son's name* (the name of *Tif'eret*). See *Zohar* 1:154b; 2:197a–b; 3:191b. On the Christological parallel, see Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 144–52.

224. ***Ḥokhmah* and *Tif'eret* in His sanctuary…** A variation on Psalms 96:6: עז (*Oz*), *Might, and Tif'eret in His sanctuary*. The two lines seen by Rabbi Yeisa match Rabbi Shim'on's interpretation of the verse in Proverbs: *Ḥokhmah* above and His son, *Tif'eret*, below, illumine or flow into *Shekhinah* ("His sanctuary"), who dwells "next to them."

Rabbi Yeisa's closing words—"And so I found it on my lips"—mean that when he awoke he found himself uttering the line that he had seen in his dream. On this phenomenon, see BT *Berakhot* 55b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "If one rises early and a verse falls into his mouth, this is a minor prophecy." See above, pp. 330–31, n. 469.

225. **You are still too young…** On Rabbi Yeisa's young age, see *Zohar* 1:162a; 2:153a.

The Reapers of the Field are the Companions who harvest secrets of Torah sprouting in the field of *Shekhinah*.

See *Zohar* 1:156a (*ST*), 216a; 2:37a, 85b, 240b, 258a (*Heikh*); 3:106a, 127b (*IR*), 141b (*IR*), 143a (*IR*), 144a (*IR*),

214b, 297a; *ZḤ* 85d (*MhN, Rut*); *OY*; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 175–76, n. 99. On *Shekhinah* as field, see Vol. 2, p. 206, n. 22.

226. **If one comes to purify himself…** See BT *Shabbat* 104a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "If one comes to defile himself, he is provided an opening; if one comes to purify himself, he is assisted."

Elohim is a name of *Shekhinah*, while *YHVH* designates *Tif'eret*. Thus, once Moses climbed to the rung of *Shekhinah*, he was invited to ascend even higher. See Naḥmanides on Exodus 19:3, 20.

On the passage in *Shabbat*, see BT *Yoma* 39a; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 528–29; *Zohar* 1:53b–54a, 56b, 62a, 76b, 88b, 99b, 125b, 129b, 169b, 195b, 198b, 200a; 2:50a; 3:47a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 28; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 14–15 (17–18). Cf. BT *Makkot* 10b: "Rabbah son of Bar Ḥana said in the name of Rabbi Huna (some say, Rabbi Huna said in the name of Rabbi El'azar), 'From the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings it can be demonstrated that one is led on the path one wishes to take.'"

227. ***YHVH called to him…*** The verse concludes: *"Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and tell the Children of Israel."*

228. ***Happy is one You choose…* whomever He desires…** Rabbi Yitsḥak expands the discussion: not only Moses, but anyone desired by God can draw near and dwell in His presence.

The רשימין (*reshimin*), "markings, insignia," may refer to letters of the divine name (Galante) or to a protective ray of divine light (*OY*). On the ray, see *Zohar* 1:104a; 3:76b. Cf. the extended discussion (above at notes 76–187) of physiognomic markings and lines, associated with various letters. Techniques of physiognomy were employed by the Merkavah mystics to ascertain whether a potential initiate was fit to receive esoteric teachings (see above, note 76).

Furthermore, a mystic seeking to ascend had to display a seal with a holy name in order to be admitted to each of the heavenly palaces, which were guarded by forbidding powers.

229. **Happy is the share of Moses…** Rabbi Yehudah insists that the verse in Psalms refers only to Moses.

In the verse from Exodus, *they shall not come near* applies to Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders. Moses alone ascends to the mountaintop and these others go partway up, while the people remain at the foot of the mountain.

230. ***Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob…*** The verse reads: *Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and tell* לבני (*livnei*), *to the Children* [or: *sons*] *of, Israel*.

On *house of Jacob* as females, and *sons of Israel* as males, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 2; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 41; *Tanḥuma, Metsora* 9; *Shemot Rabbah* 28:2

231. **בה (*Koh*), *Thus, shall you say…*** The word כה (*koh*), "thus, here," designates *Shekhinah*, the Divine Presence, who is always right here.

Rabbi Shim'on interprets the verse in Numbers as: *Koh, Thus* [i.e., *Shekhinah*], *shall you bless*. Similarly, the verse in Psalms means: *Your devoted ones yevarekhu koh, will bless koh* [i.e., they will bless *Shekhinah*]. The verse in Exodus now means: *Koh, Thus* [i.e., *Shekhinah*], *will say to the house of Jacob*.

On *koh* as a name of *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:90b, 96a, 152b, 174b; 2:23b, 37b; 3:145b–146a, 264b; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 12a–13a. The verse in Numbers continues: *the Children of Israel*. On this verse, see *Zohar* 3:145b–146a, 147a, 148a. On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 3:146a, 264b.

232. **כה תאמר (*Koh tomar*), *Thus will say…*** That is, *Shekhinah* (known as *koh, thus*) *will say*. See the preceding note.

The association of תאמר (*tomar*), *(you) will say*, with Judgment, and תגיד (*taggeid*), *(you) will tell*, with Compassion, reverses the midrashic interpretation, according to which *tomar* indicates a gentler tone addressed to the women, while *taggeid* conveys a stricter or harsher tone addressed to the men. This reversal accords with the kabbalistic portrayal of *Shekhinah* as characterized by *Din* (Judgment), and *Tif'eret* by *Raḥamim* (Compassion)—His alternative name. Women derive from *Shekhinah*, men from *Tif'eret*, and at Sinai each group was addressed accordingly.

The linking of the verb הגיד (*higgid*), "to tell," with *covenant* may be based on the rabbinic usage of גיד (*gid*), "sinew, tendon," as a euphemism for phallus (e.g., M *Yevamot* 8:2; BT *Qiddushin* 25a). In Deuteronomy 26:3, *told* appears with *YHVH*, the divine name associated with *Tif'eret*.

On the midrashic contrast of *tomar, you will say*, and *taggeid, you will tell*, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 2; *Leqaḥ Tov, Sekhel Tov*, and *Midrash Aggadah*, Exodus 19:3; Rashi on Exodus 19:3. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 87a, in the name of Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi: "ויגד משה (*Vayagged Mosheh*), *And Moses told* (Exodus 19:9)—words that draw one's heart like *aggadah*." See Emden's note of surprise in *Zohorei Ya'bets*. On אמר (*amar*), "to say," and הגיד (*higgid*), "to tell," in the *Zohar*, see 1:16b, 86b, 157a, 234b, 249a; 2:25b; 3:50b, 132b–133a (*IR*), 161a, 292b–293a (*IZ*), 298b; *ZḤ* 70c–d (*ShS*). See below, note 238; *NZ*.

233. **Since we have reached this…** Namely, this verse, describing the ritual of bringing the first fruits. It reads in full: *You shall come to the priest who will be in those days, and you shall say to him, "I have told today to YHVH your God that I have come to the land which YHVH swore to our fathers to give to us."*

234. **Is this the only one?…** Numerous verses read *YHVH your God* and not *YHVH our God*.

235. **Whoever lives in the land of Israel…** See BT *Ketubbot* 110b. According to Rabbi Shim'on, the seed of

Israel, which issues from *Shekhinah*, attains fulfillment only in the Holy Land, the dwelling place of *Shekhinah*. Since Moses was condemned to die before entering the land, when addressing Israel in all these verses in Deuteronomy ("everywhere"), he said *your God* rather than *our God*—thereby excluding himself and emphasizing that only his audience was about to enter and greet *Shekhinah*.

On the statement in *Ketubbot*, see *Sifra, Behar* 5:4, 109c; *Tosefta Avodah Zarah* 4:5; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 26; BT *Avodah Zarah* 8a; *Zohar* 1:95b, 153a, 177a; 2:9a; 3:266b. On instances where, in fact, Moses does say *YHVH our God*, see Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*; *NZ*; cf. *Zohar* 3:265a. For a different interpretation of Moses' saying *YHVH your God*, see *Zohar* 1:51a. Cf. *OY*; *MM*.

236. **Here, however, is written…** In this verse describing the ritual of bringing the first fruits, the people are already dwelling in the Holy Land, so the individual presenting the first fruits should say *our God*, not *your God*. Rabbi Shim'on explains that in saying *your God* to the officiating priest, the Israelite is acknowledging the quality of *Ḥesed* (the symbol and source of priesthood) and offering thanks for the divine gift of the land and its fruits.

237. ***house of Jacob… sons of Israel…*** The first phrase refers to the women and their divine source (*Shekhinah*), the second to the men and their source (*Tif'eret*). The name *Jacob* signifies the patriarch's attaining the rung of *Shekhinah*, while the name *Israel* signifies his reaching the more complete rung of *Tif'eret*, which balances right and left. The two aspects of the patriarch are united ("onto one [rung] they ascend"), but the name *Israel* represents "consummation of all."

See above, notes 230, 232. On the significance of the two names Jacob and Israel, see *Zohar* 1:145b, 147b–148b (*ST*), 174a, 176a, 177b, 210b; 3:73a, 210b.

238. ***And tell the sons of Israel*—revealing wisdom…** The expression ותגיד (*ve-taggeid*), *and you will tell*,

implies revealing what is concealed, mysterious, or profound.

See above, note 232. On the revelatory sense of the verb הגיד (*higgid*), "tell," see Genesis 3:11; 31:20; 41:25; Judges 14:12, 15–16; 1 Kings 10:3; Daniel 2:2; Job 11:6; *Zohar* 1:234b, 249a; 3:50b, 161a, 292b–293a (*IZ*), 298b; *ZḤ* 70c–d (*ShS*). On *haggadah* as referring to the allegorical method of interpretation, see *Zohar* 2:99a; *ZḤ* 83a (*MhN, Rut*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1083–85; Talmage, "Ha-Munnaḥ 'Haggadah,'" 271–73.

239. **medicinal herbs…** On the healing properties of herbs, see Wisdom of Ben Sira 38:4, 7, quoted in *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:6. "Bundle of bundles" apparently implies that the man had various bundles of different herbs, which he then bundled all together.

240. **for three days…** According to Leviticus 13, one who is suspected of contracting צרעת (*tsara'at*) is confined for a period (or periods) of seven days. The term *tsara'at*, traditionally rendered "leprosy," actually refers to another type (or types) of skin disease involving scaling, flaking, or blanching.

241. **Now your God is with you…** Now it is clear that God is with you.

242. **This corresponds with what is written…** *House of Jacob* refers to the women, *sons of Israel* to the men. See above, p. 431 and n. 230.

243. **because I am the greatest expert…** Following the reading of numerous manuscripts (including M5, O2, O17, R1), Mantua, and Cremona: דאנא (*de-ana*), "because I am." *OY* and later printed editions read: דאבא (*de-abba*), "because [my] father is."

244. **on the northern side** North is associated with harsh Judgment and evil.

See Jeremiah 1:14: *From the north evil will be let loose on all the inhabitants of the land*. Jeremiah is referring to an attack by the Babylonians, who would approach from the

north, Jerusalem's most vulnerable point. In *Bahir* 109 (162), this verse is quoted to demonstrate that north is linked with evil. See *Zohar* 1:151a; 2:203a; 3:173b.

245. **man with two heads...** A demonic creature.

According to one tradition, the descendants of Cain have two heads. See *Beit ha-Midrash*, 4:151–52; Judah ben Barzillai, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 173; *Tosafot, Menaḥot* 37a, s.v. *o qum gelei; Zohar* 1:9b, 157a; *ZḤ* 9b (*ST*); *TZ* 64, 96a; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:143, n. 34; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 125, n. 84.

246. **mortar...** A conjectural rendering of קיסטא (*qista*), apparently derived from Latin *cista*, "chest, box," and Greek *kiste*, "basket, hamper."

See M *Kelim* 15:1; JT *Sanhedrin* 9:6, 27b; *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *qst*. Cf. Vol. 2, p. 405, n. 695; Vol. 3, p. 486, n. 838.

247. **Chameleon...** The two-headed creature bemoans his lowly fate.

"Chameleon" renders זקיטא (*zaqita*). See BT *Sanhedrin* 108b; *DE*. Cf. *Ma'arikh*, s.v. *zqt*.

248. **concealed this wisdom... so that they will not stray...** By relying on the wisdom and forgetting its divine source.

According to rabbinic tradition, King Hezekiah concealed a book of remedies. Rashi explains that he did this because otherwise the sick would recover so quickly that they would not humble their hearts and pray to God for healing.

See M *Pesaḥim* 4:9; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 2; JT *Pesaḥim 9:1*, 36c–d; BT *Berakhot* 10b (and Rashi, ad loc.), *Pesaḥim* 56a (and Rashi, ad loc.); Maimonides, *Commentary on the Mishnah, Pesaḥim* 4:10; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:369, n. 90; Scholem.

249. **There is not a single grass...** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:6, in the name of Rabbi Simon: "You cannot find a single blade of grass [below (per Oxford MS 147)] that

does not have a constellation in the sky, striking it and telling it: 'Grow!'"

See Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 2:10; *Zohar* 1:34a; 2:15b (*MhN*), 30b, 171b; 3:86a; *ZḤ* 8b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 181, 294; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 135.

On hyssop and its purifying power, see Exodus 12:22; Leviticus 14:4, 6 (for purifying the recovered leper); Numbers 19:6, 18; Psalms 51:9; *Zohar* 2:15b (*MhN*), 35b, 41a (*Piq*).

250. ***on eagles' wings…*** **With compassion…** See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 2; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 19:4; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 314; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:11; Rashi on Exodus 19:4; Deuteronomy 32:11.

On the eagle's compassion, see JT *Pe'ah* 1:1, 15d; *Midrash Shemu'el* 7:2; *Tanḥuma, Eqev* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Eqev* 3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23; *Zohar* 3:233a, 298b.

251. ***way of an eagle in heaven…*** *Heaven* symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who is also known as *Raḥamim* (Compassion). See *Zohar* 3:298b. On the eagle's combining compassion and judgment, see *Zohar* 2:42a.

252. **from Cappadocia to Lydda…** This itinerary recurs frequently in the *Zohar*. See above, p. 128, n. 217.

253. ***and on the right the four of them…*** From Ezekiel's description of the four *ḥayyot*, (angelic) "living beings," carrying the divine chariot-throne. The eagle's position is not mentioned, unlike that of the lion or the ox; Rabbi Ḥiyya wonders why.

The full verse reads: *The image of their face was a human face, and on the right the four of them had a lion's face, and on the left the four of them had an ox's face, and the four of them had an eagle's face*. The peculiar formulation of the verse reflects the sequence of observation. The onlooker (on any side) was confronted by a human face, flanked by two animal faces on its right and left. Finally, from what could be seen on the heads of the

rest of the creatures, the onlooker inferred that in back of the human face confronting him was an eagle's face. See Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, 45.

254. **In the site where Jacob dwells…** In *Tif'eret*, who is called *Raḥamim* (Compassion) and who balances *Ḥesed* (Love) on the right and *Din* (Judgment) on the left. *Tif'eret* is also known as *heaven*, and here the eagle dwells, grasping the lion on the right and the ox on the left. See *Zohar* 3:298b; above, notes 250–51.

The human face of the *ḥayyot* includes all faces and may symbolize *Shekhinah*, who includes all images. See *Zohar* 1:19a, 20b; above, notes 72, 111; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 50–51, 53–54, 72. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

Ezekiel 1:26, describing what lies above the *ḥayyot*, reads in full: *Above the expanse over their heads—like the appearance of sapphire, image of a throne. And upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of a human being upon it, above*.

255. ***she has no breasts…*** Her breasts are not yet formed. *When she is spoken for* means when she is wooed by prospective suitors.

256. ***little sister*—Assembly of Israel…** The people of Israel are described as God's sister, based on a midrashic reading of Song of Songs 5:2: *my sister, my beloved*.

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pequdei* 8; *Shemot Rabbah* 52:5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:8.

257. ***no breasts…* no merits or good deeds…** For this symbolism, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 39:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:8.

On breasts as constituting a woman's beauty, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:6; BT *Berakhot* 10b; *Zohar* 1:45a (*Heikh*).

258. ***What will we do for our sister?…*** According to a rabbinic tradition, God's revelation at Mount Sinai was so

overwhelming that the people of Israel died momentarily and had to be revived.

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:6, 16; BT *Shabbat* 88b; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Shemot Rabbah* 29:4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:1; below at notes 341, 388.

According to the midrashic reading of Song of Songs, Israel was married to God at Mount Sinai. Therefore, the conclusion of this verse—*on the day when she is spoken for*—can allude to this momentous occasion.

259. **three days that they did not couple conjugally…** According to the instruction given in Exodus 19:15: *Ready yourselves for three days; do not go near a woman*. The male Israelites' preparations for the experience of Revelation entailed abstaining from sexual contact. See the view of Rabbi Yose in BT *Shabbat* 86b–87a; *MM*; *MmD*. Cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 928–34, 1000–1004.

The angels sanctify God's name in heaven, and correspondingly the people of Israel sanctify His name on earth in prayer.

260. ***on the third day…for three days…*** Rabbi Yose indicates that the phrase *on the third day* refers not to the third day of the week or the month, but rather to the third day of the preparation commanded in the preceding verse.

261. **His whole celestial Family…** All of the angels.

The people of Israel, having just emerged from generations of slavery, are spiritually and morally immature.

262. ***on the third day*, precisely, which is *Raḥamei*…** *Tif'eret*, also known as *Raḥamim*—Aramaic, *Raḥamei*—(Compassion), is the third of the seven lower *sefirot*, which are pictured as seven cosmic days. The first two "days" are *Ḥesed* (Love) on the right and *Gevurah* (Might)—also known as *Din* (Judgment)—on the left. God revealed Himself at Mount Sinai *on the third day*, that is, in His attribute of Compassion, which balances *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*.

The verse from Psalms alludes to this particular manifestation, since *the heavens* symbolize *Tif'eret*. According to midrashic tradition, at Sinai God bent the heavens so that they touched the top of the mountain and the Divine Glory appeared there. See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 4, 9; above at note 200.

According to rabbinic tradition, the revelation to Moses at Sinai (and the revelation of at least the first two of the Ten Commandments to all of Israel) was conveyed מפי הגבורה (*mi-pi ha-gevurah*), "from the mouth of [divine] Power." See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 9; *Sifrei*, Numbers 112; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:2; BT *Shabbat* 88b, *Makkot* 24a; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 11, *Vayelekh* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'etḥannan* 6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 22; *Shemot Rabbah* 33:7; *Midrash Tehillim* 68:6. On Torah's being given "from the side of *Gevurah*," see *Zohar* 1:48b, 198a; 2:122a; 3:32a, 39a, 80b; below at notes 269–71, 360.

Israel's name is linked with the *sefirah* of *Tif'eret*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel).

263. ***When it became morning… morning without clouds…*** Clouds symbolize the dark forces of *Din* (Judgment) that prevail through the night and impede the dawn, whereas the full light of morning symbolizes *Ḥesed* (Love), also identified with the primordial light of Creation.

In the verse from Job, the *morning stars* still visible at dawn symbolize the powers of Judgment, which is known by the name *Elohim*. Once they vanished, *it became* [full] *morning* and *Ḥesed* appeared.

In the final sentence, "they were not to be found" refers to the stars, the clouds, or the powers of Judgment—which are all equivalent.

On the association of *Ḥesed* with morning, see *Zohar* 1:182b, 189a, 203a–b, 247b; 2:63a; 3:36a, 64b, 204a–b, 233a, 242a. The full verse in Samuel reads: *Like morning's light when the sun rises, morning without clouds; from radiance, from rain—vegetation from earth*.

264. ***When it became morning*, the blessed Holy One began to reveal Himself...** According to a rabbinic tradition based on this verse, the revelation at Sinai began in the morning.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 1, 3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:12; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 41 (and Luria's n. 41); *Shemot Rabbah* 30:11. Cf. *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46 (and Luria's n. 2). The full verse in Exodus reads: *It happened on the third day when it became morning, that there were thunderings and lightning and a heavy cloud on the mountain and the sound of a shofar, very strong, and all the people who were in the camp trembled*.

According to the interpretation quoted by Rabbi Yose, the people of Israel did not yet deserve to receive the Torah. However, the merit of Abraham—who *rose early in the morning* to sacrifice Isaac—secured this privilege for them.

265. **spelled קלת (*qolot*), *thunderings*, deficiently...** Without a ו (*vav*). The word קול (*qol*) can mean "voice, sound, thunder." Rabbi Abba interprets the abbreviated spelling as implying two voices that are one, namely, *Ḥesed* (symbolized by water) and *Tif'eret* (symbolized by air). *Ḥesed*, first of the seven lower *sefirot*, contains and generates all the others, including *Tif'eret*—thus "air from water." Then, *Ḥesed* passes through *Tif'eret* on its path to appear in the world—thus "water from air." The last sentence apparently recapitulates this; for a different view, see *MM*.

266. **קלת (*Qolot*)—one that is great and mighty...** Rabbi Yose interprets the abbreviated spelling as implying one particular *sefirah*, namely, *Binah*. She is "voice of voices," including and generating all the lower sefirotic voices.

At the turn of each season, as control passes from one ruling angel (or one lower *sefirah*) to another, the power of harsh Judgment momentarily prevails and one of the lower sefirotic voices (or specifically, the voice of *Tif'eret*) is

interrupted. However, the rich voice of *Binah* resounds constantly.

On the dangerous transition from season to season, see *Maḥazor Vitri*, add., 15; *Sha'arei Teshuvah (Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim)*, 80; *Zohar* 2:195b; 3:15b; *Sefer Abudarham, Sha'ar ha-Tequfot*; Aptowitzer, "Issur Shetiyyat Mayim bi-Sh'at ha-Tequfah," 122–26; Ginzberg, "La-Ḥadashim Yevaqqer," 184–86; Scholem. Cf. BT *Eruvin* 56a.

267. **Voice issues only from…air and water…** According to Rabbi Yehudah, each of the lower sefirotic voices blends the qualities of *Tif'eret* (symbolized by air) and *Ḥesed* (symbolized by water). The abbreviated spelling, קלת (*qolot*), signifies this blending of two into one. See *OY*; *MmD*. For a somewhat different interpretation, see *MM*.

268. ***And lightning…*** The *lightning* at Mount Sinai symbolizes the flame of *Gevurah*—or *Din* (Judgment)—which is balanced by *Ḥesed* (Love), symbolized by *rain*. This combination yields Compassion (another name for *Tif'eret*).

For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *DE*; *NO*; Scholem; *MmD*. The full verse in Psalms reads: *He raises mist from the end of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain; He brings forth wind from His treasuries*.

269. **Torah was given from the side of *Gevurah*** Conveying divine power. See above, p. 439 and n. 262.

270. **on the left side** The location of *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment). This would imply that Torah conveys harsh Judgment.

271. **It returned to the right…** Torah represents a harmonious blend of left and right, Judgment and Love. The verse in Deuteronomy implies this by mentioning both the divine *right hand* and *a fiery law* (fire symbolizing *Gevurah*). Similarly the verse in Exodus specifies the *right hand* and *power* (a synonym of *Gevurah*).

On the interplay between left and right in the context of Torah, see *Zohar* 1:198a, 243a; 2:84a–b, 135a, 166b, 206b, 223a; 3:176a. The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *YHVH*

from Sinai appeared and from Seir He shone upon them; He radiated from Mount Paran and He came from myriads of holy ones; from His right hand, a fiery law for them.

272. ***a heavy cloud…*** The adjective implies the supernatural quality of this dense cloud, which did not pass on but remained on the mountain.

273. וקל **(*Ve-qol*), *And the voice of, a shofar…*** The word קל (*qol*) can mean "sound" or "voice." The *darkness* is equivalent to the dense cloud.

The verse in Deuteronomy continues: *with the mountain burning in fire…*

274. **three types of darkness…** The verse reads: *The mountain was burning with fire to the heart of the heavens —darkness, cloud, and dense fog*.

275. **Inmost of all…** From the depths of *Binah*, who is called *a mighty voice, unceasing*.

See above, note 266. On *Binah* as *a mighty voice*, see also *Zohar* 1:50b, 237a. The verse reads: *These words YHVH spoke to your whole assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the dense fog—a mighty voice, adding no more*. The final expression, ולא יסף (*ve-lo yasaf*), means literally *and He did not add*. Here, Rabbi Yose follows a midrashic interpretation of the clause: "it did not cease." See *Targum Onqelos* on the verse: ולא פסיק (*ve-la pasiq*), "and it did not cease." See JT *Megillah* 1:4, 70d; BT *Sotah* 10b, *Sanhedrin* 17a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 20:21; Rashi, *Leqaḥ Tov*, and Naḥmanides on the verse. Cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 28:6.

276. ***seeing*** הקולת **(*ha-qolot*), *the thunderings…*** קלין **(*qalin*), voices…** Again, the word קול (*qol*) means "voice, sound, thunder."

On the striking formulation *seeing the qolot*, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 9, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: *"All the people were seeing ha-qolot, the thunderings*…. They were seeing the fiery word issuing from the mouth of Power and being engraved on the tablets."

See *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 20:15; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 41; *Midrash Shemu'el* 9; Rashi, Rashbam, and Ibn Ezra (short and long) on the verse; *Bahir* 29 (45); Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 46; *ZḤ* 41b–c; *TZ* 38, 79a. On *seeing the* *qolot* as seeing the divine voice appearing in the cloud, see Judah ben Barzillai, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 273; Recanati on Genesis 19:27, 26a.

"Dense fog" renders קבלא (*qavla*), "darkness." See *Targum Onqelos*, Exodus 14:20. Cf. Deuteronomy 4:11 (quoted above at note 274): *darkness, cloud, and dense fog*.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *All the people were seeing* הקולת (*ha-qolot*), *the thunderings* [or: *voices*], *and the flashes and* קול (*qol*), *the sound* [or: *voice*] *of, the shofar and the mountain smoking, and the people saw and trembled and they stood at a distance*. The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *Face-to-face* *YHVH* *spoke with you on the mountain from the midst of the fire*.

277. ***seeing* הקולת (*ha-qolot*), *the voices*...** See the preceding note.

278. **את הקולת (*Et ha-qolot*), *The voices*... את יהוה (*et YHVH*), *YHVH*...** Grammatically, the word את (*et*) is almost always an accusative particle with no clear independent sense. However, already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. Here, as often in the *Zohar*, את (*et*) alludes to *Shekhinah*, who comprises the totality of divine speech, the entire alphabet from א (*alef*) to ת (*tav*). At Sinai, Israel saw the divine voices through the medium of *Shekhinah*. Similarly, Isaiah saw the manifestation of *Shekhinah*.

On *et*, see BT *Pesaḥim* 22b, *Ḥagigah* 12a. On its significance in the verse from Isaiah, see *Zohar* 1:18a, 60a, 237a, 247a. The Masoretic text reads: *I saw* את אדני (*et Adonai*), *my Lord*.

279. **את השמים ואת הארץ (*et ha-shamayim ve-et ha-arets*)...** In this verse et amplifies the meaning to include *Ḥesed*, while *ve-*

et includes *Gevurah*. Similarly in the verses in Exodus and Proverbs, the word *et* expands the sense of the verse.

The word *et* in *et ha-qolot*, *the voices*, encompasses *Shekhinah*, who issues from these sefirotic voices. Through Her, Israel contemplated wisdom and foresaw future generations.

On the verse in Genesis, see above, p. 170 and n. 107; below at note 346. On Exodus 20:12, see BT *Ketubbot* 103a; *Kallah Rabbati* 3:13; *Leqaḥ Tov* on the verse; *Zohar* 3:83a (*RM*); below at notes 527, 528, 531. On the verse in Proverbs, see *Kallah Rabbati* 3:13.

280. **At first, *lightning*...** Earlier, before the declaration of the Ten Commandments the wording is *thunderings and lightning*; now, upon the completion of revelation, the wording is *the thunderings and the flashes* [or: *the torches*]. This change reflects the full manifestation of lightning.

For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital; Galante; *MmD*.

281. ***And the voice of the shofar... One thing has God spoken...*** This divine *voice* was multivocal.

According to a midrashic tradition, the verse from Psalms indicates that God spoke all the Ten Commandments in a single utterance, though these were heard individually by Israel; or, that He spoke the two different versions of the Decalogue (recorded in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5) in a single utterance, though these were heard individually.

According to another rabbinic tradition, God declared directly to Israel only the first two of the Ten Commandments: *I am YHVH your God*... and *You shall have no other gods beside Me*... (the only ones stated in the first person). The others were conveyed to Israel by Moses. *Tanḥuma* and Rashi (see below) apply the verse in Psalms to these first two commandments, implying that God spoke both of them simultaneously, though Israel heard them individually: *One thing has God spoken, two have I heard*.

On all Ten Commandments being spoken simultaneously, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 8; *Baḥodesh* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on Exodus 15:11; 20:1; *Sifrei*, Numbers 42, 102, 111; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 11; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:7.

On the two different versions of the Ten Commandments being spoken simultaneously, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 7; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 20:8; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 5:12; JT *Nedarim* 3:2, 37d; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 27a.

On Israel hearing only the first two of the Ten Commandments directly from God, see BT *Makkot* 23b–24a, *Horayot* 8a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 41; *Tanḥuma, Vayelekh* 2; *Shemot Rabbah* 33:7; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 20:14; above, note 262. For the quotation of the verse in Psalms in this specific context, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 41; *Tanḥuma, Vayelekh* 2; Rashi on Numbers 15:22 and on BT *Makkot* 24a, s.v. *mi-pi ha-gevurah*.

For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

282. **the *voice* that is called *shofar*...** Apparently alluding to *Tif'eret*, who is the core of the seven lower *sefirot* and the central divine voice. *Tif'eret* issues from *Binah*, who is identified with *the Day of Atonement* (and often Herself called *shofar*).

Instead of אתברי (*itberei*), "is born," several witnesses (including N47, *OY*, Mantua) read אתקרי (*itqerei*), "it is called," which could yield the meaning: "on account of *the Day of Atonement* (namely, *Binah*), the voice of *Tif'eret* is called *shofar*." For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

283. **Just as a shofar...** The voice (or sound) of the shofar is generated by moist breath. Similarly, *Binah* (the divine shofar) includes voice and air (both symbolizing *Tif'eret*) and water (symbolizing *Ḥesed*). All the lower sefirotic voices issue from Her.

See *Zohar* 1:114a–b; 2:184b; 3:38b, 99b (*RM*), 261a.

284. ***Voice* issues from *shofar*...** *Tif'eret* (the central divine voice) issues from *Binah*, who maintains Her vital role as the source of all.

285. ***the shofar*—spelled השפר (*ha-shofar*)...** Above, Rabbi Yehudah had indicated that the entire phrase *the voice of the shofar* refers simply to *Tif'eret*, not to *Tif'eret* (*the voice*) issuing from *Binah* (*the shofar*). Now, he supports this view by linking the abbreviated spelling השפר (*ha-shofar*)—without a ו (*vav*)—to the root שפר (*shfr*), "to please, be fair, beautiful," which suggests the meaning of *Tif'eret* (Beauty).

286. **place from which the voice issues...** Rabbi Shim'on disagrees with Rabbi Yehudah, insisting that *shofar* refers to *Binah*. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

287. ***everything emanating from YHVH's mouth...*** Now Rabbi Shim'on indicates that this phrase too refers to *Binah*, who is also described as *the voice of the shofar*, more potent than any of the lower sefirotic voices.

The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *He afflicted you and made you hunger and fed you the manna, which you did not know nor did your fathers know, in order to make you know that not on bread alone does the human live but on everything emanating from YHVH's mouth does the human live*. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *MmD*.

288. ***a mighty voice... a voice of sheer silence...*** Both, paradoxically, describing *Binah*. Below, Rabbi Shim'on explains the meaning of *silence*.

On the verse in Deuteronomy, see above, p. 442 and n. 275. On the verse in Kings, see *Zohar* 1:209a; 3:30b, 193b. The context (19:11–12) reads: *He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before YHVH." And behold, YHVH was passing by, and a great, mighty wind splitting mountains and shattering rocks before YHVH; YHVH was not in the wind. After the wind—an earthquake; YHVH was not in the earthquake.*

*After the earthquake—fire; YHVH was not in the fire. After the fire—*קול (*qol*), *a sound* [or: *voice*] *of, sheer silence*.

289. **one must be silent about it…** The hidden realm of *Binah* must not be discussed openly.

Elsewhere, *Binah* is called *Who*, implying that a seeker may inquire about Her but cannot expect any clear or conclusive answers. The mystical name *Who* becomes a focus of meditation, as question turns into quest. See Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, 1:91a: "Concerning everything that cannot be grasped, its question constitutes its answer."

On *Binah* as *Who*, see *Zohar* 1:1b, 45b, 85b–86a, 237b; 2:126b–127a, 138a, 139b, 226a, 231b; 3:185b; Vol. 3, p. 445, n. 681.

290. **they saw what they saw…** They saw *the voice of the shofar* and the other phenomena of divine manifestation.

For the full verse in Exodus, see above, note 276. The verse in Isaiah describes the heavenly voice heard by the prophet, which shook the Temple.

291. ***I looked, and here, a stormy wind…*** The first four elements mentioned here by Ezekiel (*stormy wind, great cloud, flashing fire, radiance*) represent four demonic husks or shells surrounding the kernel of holiness—which is identified with חשמל (*ḥashmal*), *amber*.

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:463–64, 509; above, notes 53, 188.

292. **To shatter the four kingdoms** That subjugated Israel, namely, Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome. According to Rabbi Yose, this vision appeared to the prophet Ezekiel so that he could reassure and comfort his people who had recently been exiled to Babylon.

Cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 13b: *"A stormy wind coming from the north*…. Where did it go? Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: 'It went to conquer the whole world under the wicked Nebuchadnezzar [king of Babylon], And why all this? So that the nations of the world would not say: "The blessed

Holy One delivered His children into the hand of a lowly nation.”’”

See *Zohar* 2:203a; *ZḤ* 38a–b. On the four kingdoms, see Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:223, n. 82.

293. **decrees of *Gevurah above*** Decrees of *Din* (Judgment).

294. ***Coming from the north…* not written *coming from north…*** *North* would indicate *Gevurah*, while *the north* indicates the more hidden realm and source of *Gevurah*, namely, *Binah*. Alternatively, *north* would indicate geographical north, while *the north* indicates *Gevurah*. Rabbi Yehudah is associating צָפוֹן (*tsafon*), *north*, with צָפוּן (*tsafun*), “hidden.”

For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital; Galante; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*. See Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 59.

295. ***A great cloud and flashing fire…*** “Joined to it…” apparently means joined partially to *Gevurah*, in order to stimulate Judgment. The harsh, demonic, fiery aspect of Judgment derives its power daily from *Gevurah* and then executes judgment in the world.

For various interpretations, see *OY*; Vital; Galante; *MmD*. “Groat cakes” renders קרדיטי (*qarditei*), which apparently derives from כרדוט (*kardut*), employed by *Targum Yonatan* to translate the rare biblical term בונים (*kavvanim*), “cakes,” in Jeremiah 7:18; 44:19. In other Targumic passages *kardut* means “a sleeved tunic” (based on Greek *cheiridotos*), but in the Jeremiah passages it may represent a corruption of Greek *chondrites*, “made of groats.”

See *Arukh*, s.v. *kardat, kardut*; *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *kardat*; Radak on Jeremiah 7:18; 44:19; *Zohar* 1:234a (Vol. 3, p. 417, n. 569); 2:83a (below, note 337), 174a; 3:144b (*IR*); *OY*; Galante; *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 190; *DE*; *NZ*; Scholem.

296. **what sweetens it?…** The נגה (*nogah*), *radiance*, surrounds the *flashing fire* and moderates it, thereby

rendering Judgment bearable.

On the *nogah*, which links the demonic realm to its divine source, see *Zohar* 2:203b, 216a; *ZḤ* 38a–b; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 59–60; *TZ* 18, 36a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:463–64, 509; above, note 53.

297. **What is *ḥashmal*?...** The precise meaning of the term is unclear, but the context in Ezekiel indicates a bright substance. It has been rendered *amber, gleaming amber, glowing metal*. In postbiblical literature it was regarded as endowed with holy and dangerous properties. In the *Zohar*, it represents a kernel of holiness, surrounded by the four demonic husks or shells. See above, notes 188, 291.

Here חשמל (*ḥashmal*) is interpreted as an acronymic abbreviation of חיות אש ממללות (*ḥayyot esh memallelot*), "fiery beings speaking." In Ezekiel's vision, the four *ḥayyot*, (angelic) "living beings," carry the divine chariot-throne. The context (1:4–5) reads: *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming from the north, a great cloud and flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it; and from within it, like the color of ḥashmal, amber, from within the fire. And from within it, an image of four ḥayyot, living beings, and this was their appearance: they had the image of a human*.

The interpretation of *ḥashmal* as an abbreviation appears in BT *Ḥagigah* 13a–b: "What is חשמל (*ḥashmal*)? Rav Yehudah said, 'חיות אש ממללות (*ḥayyot esh memallelot*), Fiery beings speaking.'"

298. ***Ḥashmal*—heart of fire...** The holy kernel, *ḥashmal*, lies within the four shells described by Ezekiel ("after four rungs").

See the preceding note. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MmD*.

299. **Here Israel saw what Ezekiel did not see...** At Sinai, Israel's vision of the divine realm surpassed that of Ezekiel. They saw five divine rungs culminating in *Binah, voice of the shofar*; whereas Ezekiel saw the divine kernel (*ḥashmal*)—situated directly below ("outside") the sefirotic

realm—through four shells, which were "outside" of the realm of holiness. The "five rungs of voices" seen by Israel correspond to the Five Books of Moses.

On Israel seeing more at Sinai than Ezekiel saw in his vision, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 3; *Devarim Rabbah* 7:8; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 111. Cf. above, p. 289, n. 324. On the Torah being given in five voices (based on multiple references to *voice* and *voices* in Exodus 19:16, 19), see BT *Berakhot* 6b; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 488; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 7; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 162 (and Wolfson's note); below at note 361. On *Binah* as *voice of the shofar*, see above at notes 287–88.

300. **Of Israel is written…** Israel saw God directly and clearly, whereas Ezekiel saw through various shells and thus glimpsed only an *appearance* and *image* of the divine reality.

The verse in Deuteronomy concludes: *from the midst of the fire*. The phrase *like the appearance* renders כעין (*ke-ein*), which can also be rendered "like the color." The word *image* appears frequently in Ezekiel 1. On Ezekiel seeing only an *appearance* or *image*, see below at note 316; *TZ*, intro, 6b.

On seeing from behind walls, see Maimonides, *Shemonah Peraqim*, 7; *Zohar* 1:232b (*Tos*) (Vol. 3, p. 405, n. 509); 2:69a–b, 130b, 213a; 3:174b; *ZḤ* 15c (*MhN*), 39d.

301. **Happy is his share…** Moses saw God more directly and fully than any other human.

See BT *Yevamot* 49b: "All the prophets gazed through an opaque glass, whereas Moses our teacher gazed through a translucent glass." The phrase "an opaque glass" renders אספקלריא שאינה מאירה (*ispaqlarya she-einah me'irah*), "an *ispaqlarya* that does not shine." The phrase "a translucent glass" renders אספקלריא המאירה (*ispaqlarya ha-me'irah*), "an *ispaqlarya* that shines." The word *ispaqlarya* derives from Greek

speklon, "mirror, window-pane," and Latin *speculum*, "mirror."

In the *Zohar, Tif'eret* (Moses' *sefirah*) is the *ispaqlarya* that shines, while *Shekhinah* is the *ispaqlarya* that does not shine on its own but rather reflects the other *sefirot*. Here, Rabbi Yehudah is apparently implying that Moses gazed upon God through his *sefirah—Tif'eret*, the *ispaqlarya* that shines—not through the medium of *Shekhinah*. The word "vision" (in the phrase "some other vision") renders חיזו (*ḥeizu*), which can also mean "mirror."

Cf. 1 Corinthians 13:12: "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face-to-face." See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 1:14; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 33–34; Naḥmanides on Exodus 6:2; *Zohar* 1:33b, 120a, 170b–171a, 183a; 2:23b, 221a; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:44–45, n. 242; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, index, s.v. "speculum"; Huss, "Ḥakham Adif mi-Navi," 109–14. On *ḥeizu*, see above, note 72.

The verse in Exodus continues: *forty days and forty nights*. The verse in Numbers reads: *Mouth to mouth I speak with him; in a vision, not in riddles; and the form of YHVH he beholds*.

302. היה היה (***Hayoh hayah***), ***Happening it happened...*** This phrase combines the infinitive and finite forms of the verb "to be." It can be rendered simply *it happened*, but Rabbi Yose interprets the phrase to mean that Ezekiel saw this dramatic vision fleetingly, or for that particular moment (see the following note).

The full verse reads: *Happening it happened that the word of YHVH came to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Kevar. There the hand of YHVH came upon him*.

See *Zohar* 1:85a, 149a; 2:2a–b, 5a (*MhN*), 82a–b; *ZḤ* 37c, 38a; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 58–59. Cf. *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1; BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 25a.

303. **Coming for sustenance…** Rabbi Yehudah indicates that Ezekiel's profound vision was essential due to the national emergency: the stunned people of Israel, exiled in Babylon, had to be comforted and reassured of God's continuing presence. See above, pp. 3–5.

On God accompanying the people of Israel in exile, see BT *Megillah* 29a: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai says, 'Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of the blessed Holy One! Wherever they went in exile, *Shekhinah* accompanied them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* was with them…. When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* was with them…. And even when they are destined to be redeemed, *Shekhinah* will be with them.'" See above, p. 91, n. 79.

304. **he saw and did not see…** Rabbi El'azar interprets the phrase היה היה (*hayoh hayah*), *happening it happened*, as implying that Ezekiel's vision *happened* incompletely. Israel, on the other hand, saw the divine voices directly, each of them according to his capacity and virtue.

On Ezekiel's partial vision, see above, note 300. On the theme of each Israelite experiencing the revelation according to his capacity, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:25; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 25; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemot* 22, *Yitro* 17; *Shemot Rabbah* 5:9; 29:1.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *All the people were seeing* הקולת (*ha-qolot*), *the thunderings* [or: *voices*], *and the flashes and* קול (*qol*), *the sound* [or: *voice*] *of, the shofar and the mountain smoking, and the people saw and trembled and they stood at a distance*. See above, note 276.

305. **Five rungs to the right…to the left…** Corresponding to the ten *sefirot*, which are evenly balanced. Similarly, at Sinai, Israel received the Ten Commandments (or Utterances), which were engraved five on the right tablet and five on the left. These ten formed the basis of all the commandments of Torah.

On the verse in Deuteronomy, see Moses de León, Commentary on the Ten *Sefirot*, 341a. On the phrase "according to the pattern above," see *OY*; Galante. Cf. above, note 141.

On the relation between the Ten Commandments and all of the commandments of Torah, see *Tanḥuma, Qoraḥ* 12; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:15–16; 18:21; Saadiah Gaon, *Siddur*, 191–216; idem, Commentary on *Sefer Yetsirah*, 47–48; Rashi on Exodus 24:12 (mentioning Saadiah Gaon's *azharot*) and Song of Songs 5:16; Judah ben Barzillai, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 278; *Bahir* 87 (124); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 521; *Zohar* 2:90b, 93b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 340 (and Wolfson's note); below, note 543.

306. **all of Israel saw...** At Sinai, Israel saw the various divine *voices* through the medium of *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by a glass lantern. Ezekiel, however, saw *Shekhinah* and Her accompanying angels alone, nothing higher; and even this he saw indistinctly, as if from behind partitions.

See above, note 299. For either one or two reasons, the phrase *seeing* את הקולת (*et ha-qolot*), *the voices*, alludes to a single vision of the various voices through *Shekhinah*. First, the word *et* refers to *Shekhinah* (see above, note 278). Second, the word הקולת (*ha-qolot*), *the voices*, is spelled without the second ו (*vav*), and this abbreviated spelling can imply one voice. See Recanati on Exodus 19:13, 44d; Exodus 20:15, 46d; *Minḥat Shai* on Exodus 20:15; *MmD*. Cf. above, notes 265–67.

On looking from behind walls, see above, note 300. "Glass lantern" renders עשישתא (*ashishta*). See *Zohar* 1:33b; 2:23a, 130b, 186b, 221a; *ZḤ* 41c, 63b (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 97 (124); above, p. 80, n. 36.

307. **Happy is the generation...** At Sinai, Israel's vision of God resulted from the fact that He revealed Torah to them through *Ḥesed*, identified with *His right hand*.

Rabbi Yehudah's closing question means "What is the difference between God's manifestation to Israel at Sinai and His manifestation to Ezekiel?"

The full verse in Exodus actually reads: *They shall ready themselves for the third day, for on the third day YHVH will come down before the eyes of all the people on Mount Sinai*. Cf. Exodus 19:20.

The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *YHVH from Sinai appeared and from Seir He shone upon them; He radiated from Mount Paran and He came from myriads of holy ones; from His right hand, a fiery law for them*. See above, note 271.

308. **Here, at Sinai, head and body of the King...** Here, Israel perceived the higher *sefirot* (*Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*), constituting the divine head, and the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, constituting the divine body. Rabbi Yose apparently interprets the verse from Psalms to mean: *He* [*Binah*] *bent the heavens* [symbolizing *Tif'eret*, trunk of the sefirotic body] *and came down*. Ezekiel, however, experienced only *the hand of YHVH*, namely, *Shekhinah*.

According to midrashic tradition, at Sinai God *bent the heavens* so that they touched the top of the mountain and the Divine Glory appeared there. See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 4, 9; above at notes 200, 262.

"Upper *hand*" apparently refers to *Gevurah*, and "lower *hand*" to *Shekhinah*. Alternatively, the upper and lower hands refer to different aspects of *Shekhinah*. See *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

On the term "body of the King," see *Zohar* 1:216a, 217b, 219a, 223b; 2:85b–86a, 87a–b, 123a, 193b; 3:294b (*IZ*). Cf. the Christian term *corpus Domini*, "body of the Lord."

On the body following the head, see *Tosefta Ta'anit* 2:5; BT *Eruvin* 41a. The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *It happened that the word of YHVH came to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi,*

in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Kevar, and there the hand of YHVH came upon him.

309. **מראות (*mar'ot*), *visions of, Elohim*—spelled מראת (*mar'at*), *a vision of*...** According to Rabbi Yose, the lack of the letter ו (*vav*) in the spelling of מראת (*mar'ot*), *visions of*, implies that Ezekiel saw a single מראת (*mar'at*), *vision of*, God—namely, *Shekhinah*. The word מראה (*mar'ah*) means "vision" and "mirror," both of which pertain to *Shekhinah*, who reveals and reflects the higher *sefirot*. Cf. above, note 301.

Actually, in the Masoretic text, this word in the opening verse of Ezekiel is spelled with a *vav*: מראות (*mar'ot*), *visions of*. See above, p. 196, n. 195; *Zohar* 2:124b; *Minḥat Shai* on Ezekiel 1:1. The deficient spelling—במראת (*be-mar'ot*)—appears in Genesis 46:2. See *Zohar* 1:211a (Vol. 3, p . 295, n. 194). Cf. above, p. 158, n. 66.

For other instances of a difference between the Masoretic spelling or wording and the *Zohar*'s reading, see *Zohar* 1:58b, 83b, 84a, 122b (*MhN*), 236b (Vol. 3, p. 435, n. 644); 2:5b (*MhN*), 40a, 41b (*Piq*), 83a, 176b (*SdTs*); 3:4b, 40b, 68a, 148a, 184a, 202b, 203b, 207a, 254a (*RM*). On this phenomenon, see Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 50, 131–32, n. 125.

310. **But is *Shekhinah* not everything?** Since She includes all of the higher *sefirot*.

311. **Head of the King does not compare...** Israel's vision of the higher sefirotic realms surpasses the vision of Ezekiel, who saw only *Shekhinah*—last of the *sefirot* and "feet of the King."

312. **את יהוה (*et YHVH*), *YHVH*...** In describing his vision, Isaiah employs the word את (*et*), implying that He saw a manifestation of *Shekhinah*, who is called *et*. See above, note 278. As mentioned there, the Masoretic text reads: *I saw* את אדני (*et Adonai*), *my Lord*.

Thus both Isaiah and Ezekiel saw a vision of *Shekhinah*, whereas Moses gazed further. (See above, p. 449 and n.

301.) Rabbi Yose wonders, though, why Isaiah's description of his vision is so much briefer than Ezekiel's.

313. **One spoke in general, the other in detail…** Rabbi Yose explains that Isaiah spoke in general terms, whereas Ezekiel offered a rich description.

See BT *Ḥagigah* 13b, in the name of Rava: "All that Ezekiel saw, Isaiah saw. What does Ezekiel resemble? A villager who saw the king. And what does Isaiah resemble? A city-dweller who saw the king." To the rustic, the sight of the king is a novelty and he records his impressions at length, whereas the city-dweller is familiar with seeing royalty and feels no need to indulge in lengthy description. See Rashi and *Tosafot*, ad loc.

Rabbi Yose adds that Ezekiel's detailed account was for the benefit of his desperate listeners, exiled in Babylon, reassuring them that God had not abandoned them. See above, note 303.

314. ***in the land of the Chaldeans…*** Why would *Shekhinah* reveal Herself in such a degraded land—inhabited by *the Chaldeans*, who do not deserve to exist? Because otherwise, Rabbi Ḥiyya explains, the exiled Israelites would not have realized that God was dwelling among them.

On the negative evaluation of the Chaldeans, see JT *Ta'anit* 3:4, 66c; BT *Sukkah* 52b. The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *It happened that the word of YHVH came to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Kevar, and there the hand of YHVH came upon him*.

315. ***By the River Kevar…*** Whose waters were undefiled by the impurity of the land. Rabbi Ḥiyya associates the river's name, כבר (*kevar*), *Kevar*, with its homonym: כבר (*kevar*), "already," which implies that this River of Already has existed since the beginning of Creation. According to a midrashic tradition, *the River Kevar* is identical with the Euphrates, one of four riverheads issuing from the primordial river of Eden. The Garden of Eden was the dwelling place of *Shekhinah*.

On the purifying power of flowing water, see Leviticus 15:13; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:836–38, 923–24. On the relation between prophetic revelation and the purity of water, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1 (citing Daniel 8:2; 10:4; Ezekiel 1:3); *Zohar* 1:222b (Vol. 3, p. 336, n. 197); Idel, "Le-Gilguleha shel Tekhniqah Qedumah."

On *the River Kevar* as River of Already, see *Re'uyyot Yeḥezqel*, 111–14; Matt, *Essential Kabbalah*, 126, 205; *Zohar* 1:6b, 85a, 149a–b. On *the River Kevar* as the Euphrates, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:3, in the name of Rabbi Yudan. Cf. *Tanḥuma, Bo* 5. On the Euphrates as one of the four primordial riverheads, see Genesis 2:14.

316. **four living beings deep within the holy palace…** Symbolizing four *sefirot* (*Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Shekhinah*) who dwell within the divine realm and issue from the Holy Ancient One—the most ancient manifestation of *Ein Sof* through *Keter*, Its crown. Ezekiel saw these divine entities indistinctly, as *an image*.

On Ezekiel seeing only an *appearance* or *image*, see above, p. 449 and note 300; *TZ*, intro, 6b.

317. **As above, so below…** The sefirotic חיות (*ḥayyot*), *living beings*, are archetypes of the angelic *ḥayyot*, who inhabit various worlds.

On the kabbalistic principle of "as above, so below," see *Zohar* 1:38a, 57b–58a, 129a, 145b, 156b, 158b, 205b; 2:15b (*MhN*), 20a (*MhN*), 48b, 144a, 251a (*Heikh*); 3:45b, 65b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:273. On the similar Hermetic formulation, see *Secretum secretorum*, ed. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 262. Cf. above, pp. 159–60, n. 70.

318. **Moses saw through an *ispaqlarya*…** See BT *Yevamot* 49b: "All the prophets gazed through an opaque glass, whereas Moses our teacher gazed through a translucent glass." The phrase "an opaque glass" renders אספקלריא שאינה מאירה (*ispaqlarya she-einah me'irah*), "an *ispaqlarya* that does not shine." The phrase "a translucent glass"

renders אספקלריא המאירה (*ispaqlarya ha-me'irah*), "an *ispaqlarya* that shines." The word *ispaqlarya* derives from Greek *speklon*, "mirror, window-pane," and Latin *speculum*, "mirror."

In the *Zohar, Tif'eret* (Moses' *sefirah*) is the *ispaqlarya* that shines, while *Shekhinah* is the *ispaqlarya* that does not shine on its own but rather reflects the other *sefirot*. Thus, Moses gazed upon God directly through *Tif'eret* (the *ispaqlarya* that shines), whereas other prophets saw only through the medium of *Shekhinah*. See above, note 301.

As explained above, the phrase מראת (*mar'ot*), *visions of, Elohim*, is interpreted as implying a single *vision*, identified with *Shekhinah*. See above, p. 452 and n. 309.

The context in Numbers read: *He said, "Hear My words: If there be among you a prophet of YHVH, in a vision I make Myself known to him, in a dream I speak with him. Not so My servant Moses, in all My house he is trusted. Mouth to mouth I speak with him; in a vision, not in riddles; and the form of YHVH he beholds."*

319. **like females compared to a male... וּמַרְאֶה (*u-mar'eh*)...בַּמַּרְאָה (*ba-mar'ah*)...** Other prophets attain the manifestation of *Shekhinah*, the feminine Divine Presence, who is symbolized by the feminine noun מַרְאָה (*mar'ah*), *vision*. Moses attained the higher manifestation of *Tif'eret*, the masculine aspect of God, who is symbolized by the masculine noun מַרְאֶה (*mar'eh*), *vision*.

320. **All the more so, Ezekiel...** Like the other prophets, he also gazed through the medium of *Shekhinah*; however, in his case, She is indicated not by the complete word מראה (*mar'ah*), "vision," but rather by the word מראת (*mar'ot*), spelled deficiently, without a ו (*vav*). See above, p. 452 and n. 309.

Moses surpassed all other prophets. For the full verse in Numbers, see the end of note 318.

321. **neither blind nor lame nor crippled…** The absence of each impediment is demonstrated by an appropriate verse.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:19; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 12; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 7:1. Cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:4 *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:7.

Exodus 24:7 reads: *All that YHVH has spoken we will do and we will heed*. On the quotation from Isaiah, see the preceding verse: *Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped*.

322. ***God spoke all these words, saying*** This verse introduces the Ten Commandments.

323. **613 types of advice…** Namely, the 613 commandments of Torah.

On the 613 commandments, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:1; BT *Makkot* 23b. On Torah as advice, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 322; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:28; BT *Avodah Zarah* 17b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:12; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:5; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Temurah* 4:3.

324. **Whatever reward…** A person's essential reward is reserved for the world that is coming, a purely divine realm; anything granted to him in this world is paid out of that sum.

See BT *Ta'anit* 25a; *Shemot Rabbah* 52:3. Cf. M *Pe'ah* 1:1: "These are things whose fruit [or: interest] one enjoys in this world while the principal endures for him in the world that is coming: honoring father and mother, acts of loving-kindness, making peace between one person and another; and the study of Torah is equivalent to them all."

The sentence "Whatever reward…" can also be rendered: "Whatever earned benefits the blessed Holy One grants to a person are granted to him in the world that is coming [and not in this world]." See Scholem; *MmD*.

325. **This world, compared…** A paraphrase of M *Avot* 4:16: “Rabbi Ya’akov says, ‘This world is like פרוזדור (*perozdor*), a vestibule, before the world that is coming. Prepare yourself in the vestibule, so that you may enter the banquet hall.’”

The phrase “vestibule of a stairway” renders דסיקלא פרוזדא (*perozda de-siqla*). The first word is a playful variant on פרוזדור (*perozdor*), “vestibule.” *Siqla* derives from Latin *scala*, “staircase, ladder, gangway.”

On *siqla*, see *Tosefta Shabbat* 13:14, *Bava Batra* 4:1; JT *Bava Batra* 5:1, 15a; BT *Bava Batra* 73a; *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *seqila; Zohar* 3:296b (*IZ*); Lieberman, *Tosefta ki-Fshutah*, 3:219; 10:369. The printed editions of the *Zohar* eliminate this rare word, while several manuscripts (including M5, R1) record the Zoharic neologism טיקלא (*tiqla*), one of whose meanings is “scale” (see above, p. 329, n. 462). The form *siqla* is preserved in O2 and O17.

326. ***Levi has had no portion…*** Unlike the other tribes, Levi received no tribal territory but were dispersed throughout the areas of the other tribes. They were supported by the income of the sanctuaries so that they could devote themselves to serving God. See Deuteronomy 18:1–2; Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 106, 169–70.

327. **one who merits this supernal inheritance…** One who attains divine inheritance, as did the Levites. Such a person will be blessed in this world (meriting “the house of this world”) and all the more so in the world that is coming (meriting *Shekhinah*, “the holy house”).

The context in Isaiah (56:4–5) reads: *Thus says YHVH: As for the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, who have chosen what I desire and grasp My covenant—I will give them, in My house and within My walls, a monument and a name better than sons and daughters. An everlasting name I will give them, that will not be cut off.*

328. ***Then you will delight* על (*al*), *upon, YHVH…*** This is often understood to mean *Then you will delight in YHVH*,

but Rabbi Shim’on reads the phrase על יהוה (*al YHVH*) hyperliterally: *upon* [or: *above*] *YHVH*—alluding to a realm *above Tif’eret* (known as *YHVH*), specifically to *Keter*, from which issue all other *sefirot* (known as “crowns”) and thereby all of existence. *Keter* is known paradoxically as אין (*Ayin*), “Nothingness,” the undifferentiated and incomprehensible divine no-thingness. It is also called the Ancient of Days, the primordial manifestation of God. The righteous yearn to gaze upon this ultimate radiance.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Then you will delight* על (*al*), *upon, YHVH, and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the earth, and feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob—for the mouth of YHVH has spoken*. On the hyperliteral reading of *al YHVH*, see *Zohar* 1:216a, 219a; 2:50b, 88a–b; 3:94b.

The verse in Psalms reads: *I raise my eyes to the mountains*—מאין (*me-ayin*), *from where, will my help come?* The word אין (*ayin*) means both “where?” and “nothing.” Rabbi Shim’on reads the conclusion of the verse not as a question—*from where will my help come*?—but as a declaration: *From* [divine] *nothingness comes my help*.

On this creative reading, see Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 103a; *TZ* 70, 127a. See Ḥayyim Ḥaika of Amdur, *Ḥayyim va-Ḥesed*, 47: “God cannot come to my help unless I bind myself to *Ayin*. This is the meaning of *From ayin comes my help.*” Cf. Rumi, *Mathnawi* 6:822: “The whole world has taken the wrong way, for they fear nonexistence, while it is their refuge.” On the theme of Nothingness, see Matt, “*Ayin*.”

The full verse in Daniel reads: *I was seeing in night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven came one like a human being; he reached the Ancient of Days and was brought before Him*.

On the divine splendor, see BT *Berakhot* 17a: “A pearl in the mouth of Rav: ‘In the world that is coming, there is no eating or drinking or procreation or business or jealousy or

hatred or competition; rather, the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads, basking in the splendor of *Shekhinah*.'"

329. **על (*al*), *upon, the heights of the earth—al, above*...** The hyperliteral reading of על (*al*) as *above* implies that the righteous will ride above *Shekhinah*, who is known as *earth*—that is, they will occupy the rung of *Tif'eret*, known as heaven as well as *YHVH*.

330. **not written...*you will dwell*, but rather... *you will delight*...** The verse does not imply that the righteous will dwell *above YHVH*, in the unattainable realm of *Keter*, but rather that they will occupy the rung of *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH* and heaven), and from there they *will delight above YHVH*, perceiving the splendor of *Keter*.

The verse from Psalms apparently implies that *Binah* (known as *Elohim*) is *exalted above Tif'eret*, known as *heaven*. For another interpretation, see Galante.

331. ***heights of the earth*—namely, earth of the living...** Referring to *Shekhinah*. The plural *heights* includes both *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*, who are known respectively as Zion and Jerusalem. (Apparently, *Yesod*, who is sometimes pictured as an extension of *Tif'eret*, shares His designation "heaven.")

Rabbi Abba indicates that his interpretation does not conflict with Rabbi Shim'on's. Both of them agree that the righteous attain the radiance of *Keter* (*Ancient of Days*) but do not actually ascend to that ultimate rung; rather, they gaze upon it from the vantage point of *Tif'eret*.

On *Shekhinah* as "earth (or land) of the living," see *Zohar* 1:65b–66a, 95b, 115a, 124b, 143b, 157a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 62 (77).

332. **May my Master expound...** Rabbi Abba seeks to know, in particular, how Rabbi Shim'on understands the continuation of the verse: *and feed you the inheritance of your father Jacob*.

333. ***until the Ancient of Days*...** The verse reads: *He reached (until) the Ancient of Days*. For the full verse, see

above, near the end of note 328.

334. ***inheritance of your father Jacob… dew of heaven…*** Jacob symbolizes *Tif'eret* (also known as *heaven*), who receives (or "inherits") the flow of emanation (pictured as *dew*) from the Ancient One—the primordial manifestation of *Ein Sof* through *Keter* (the "Crown" on the divine head).

The sublime realm of the Ancient One is characterized by pure compassion, and *Keter* is described as אריך אנפין (*arikh anpin*), "slow to anger" (an expression deriving from Exodus 34:6). See *Zohar* 3:129a–b (*IR*). The configuration of *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* through *Yesod* (whose core is *Tif'eret*) is characterized by a tension between opposites: right and left, loving-kindness and judgment. Relative to the highest realm, this configuration is described as זעיר אנפין (*ze'eir anpin*), "short-tempered" (deriving from Proverbs 14:17).

The dew of emanation will one day revive the dead. Here, Rabbi Shim'on indicates that only *you* (Jacob and his descendants) will be revived, no one else. On this particularistic view of resurrection, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:6; cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 13:2.

On emanation as dew, see Naḥmanides on Exodus 16:6; *Zohar* 1:95b, 143b, 224b, 225b, 232a; 2:61b, 62b, 88a, 156b, 176b (*SdTs*), 210a; 3:26a, 128b (*IR*), 135a–b (*IR*), 208a, 288a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*).

On the animating power of dew, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34: "Rabbi Yehudah said, '… In the time to come, the blessed Holy One will bring down a dew of revival, reviving the dead….*For Your dew is a dew of lights*… (Isaiah 26:19).' Rabbi Tanḥum said, '… From where does it descend? From the head of the blessed Holy One. In the time to come, He will shake the hair of His head and bring down a dew of revival, reviving the dead, as is said: *I was asleep, but my heart was awake…. For my head is drenched with dew* (Song of Songs 5:2).'"

See *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 27:27; JT *Berakhot* 5:2, 9b; BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, *Shabbat* 88b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 32–33; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 19; *Zohar* 1:118a (*MhN*), 130b–131a, 225b, 232a; 2:28b; 3:128b (*IR*), 135b (*IR*), 288a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 88–89. The full verse in Isaiah 26 reads: *Your dead will live, my corpses will arise. Awake and shout for joy, O dwellers in the dust! For Your dew is a dew of lights, and the earth will give birth to spirits of the dead*.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *May God give you of the dew of heaven and the fat of the earth, abundance of grain and new wine*.

335. **more sublime than I had thought** Rabbi Abba had assumed that Isaac's blessing to Jacob pertained to *heaven* (symbolizing *Tif'eret*); now he realizes that the dew emanated from the highest sefirotic realm.

336. **Why ימלל (*yemallel*), *can utter*?...** Why this unusual verb, rather than the more common word ידבר (*yedabber*), "speak"? Rabbi Ḥiyya explains that the word ימלל (*yemallel*), *utter*, is linked with the expression *pluck* מלילות (*melilot*), *ears* (of corn). The verse in Psalms implies that no one can "pluck" or eliminate all of God's גבורות (*gevurot*), *mighty acts*—divine decrees of judgment issuing from *Binah*, who is the source of *Gevurah*. The plural—*gevurot, mighty acts*—emphasizes how numerous these are.

The verse in Psalms concludes: *or declare all His praise*? See BT *Megillah* 18a; *Midrash Tehillim* 19:2; *Zohar* 1:241b, 249a; 2:64a–b; 3:137b (*IR*), 294a (*IZ*).

337. **One supernal *Gevurah*...** *Binah*, source of the *sefirah* of *Gevurah* and of the divine decrees of judgment, which are known as גבורות (*gevurot*), *mighty acts* (see the preceding note). *Binah* is the Divine Mother of all the lower *sefirot*, which are known as crowns.

The image of fifty gates of *Binah* derives from BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, where Rav and Shemu'el teach: "Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the

world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)."

"Tunic" renders קרדיטי (*qarditei*), which apparently derives from כרדוט (*kardut*), "a sleeved tunic" (based on Greek *cheiridotos*). See *Targum Yonatan*, 1 Samuel 2:18; 2 Samuel 6:14; 13:18; *Targum*, 1 Chronicles 15:27; above, note 295; *DE*; *NO*; Scholem.

338. **גבורת (*Gevurot*), *Mighty acts of, YHVH*—spelled deficiently...** Without a second ו (*vav*). According to Rabbi Ḥiyya, this abbreviated spelling implies a single גבורה (*gevurah*), namely *Binah*, who includes all of the *gevurot*.

Actually, in the Masoretic text the word is spelled completely: גבורות (*gevurot*). See *Minḥat Shai* on the verse; above, note 309.

339. ***all His praise?—Shekhinah...*** The full verse reads: *Who can utter the mighty acts of YHVH or declare all His praise?* According to Rabbi Ḥiyya, *His praise* alludes to *Shekhinah*, based on the verse in Habakkuk: *His praise fills the earth*, which is a fitting description of the Divine Presence. The conclusion of the verse in Psalms now means: Who can declare the full glory of *Shekhinah*?

340. ***A river issues from Eden...*** Genesis names the four riverheads (Pishon, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates) but not the original river. Rabbi Shim'on reveals that its name is יובל (*yuval*), *stream*, designating *Binah*, the river of emanation. The cosmic sefirotic tree is planted by this constant stream and therefore yields fruit ceaselessly—namely, souls.

The present tense of the verb in Genesis—יוצא (*yotse*), *issues*—indicates that the river of *Binah* flows continually. See *Zohar* 3:65b, 267b.

On *Yuval* as the name of the primordial river, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 22:10 (in the name of Rabbi Shim'on); BT *Bekhorot* 55b (in the name of Rabbi Me'ir); *Zohar* 2:98b; 3:58a, 97a, 290b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 335; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 106; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 56 (69). יוּבַל

(*Yuval*) is a near homonym of יוֹבֵל (*yovel*), "Jubilee," another of *Binah*'s names. See below, note 358.

The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *He will be like a tree planted by water, spreading its roots by a stream; it does not fear* [or: *see, sense*] *when heat comes and its leaves are fresh; in a year of drought it is not anxious and does not cease yielding fruit*.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *YHVH will guide you always; He will satisfy your thirst in parched regions, and invigorate your bones. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters do not fail*.

341. ***God spoke…*** The verse continues: *all these words, saying*, introducing the Ten Commandments.

The verb וידבר (*vaydabber*), *spoke*, is more intensive than its alternative, ויאמר (*va-yomer*), "said." See *Sifra, Shemini* 2:7, 47c; *Sifrei*, Numbers 99; BT *Makkot* 10b–11a; *Leqaḥ Tov* and *Sekhel Tov* on Exodus 6:2; *Zohar* 1:86b; 3:132b–133a (*IR*); above, p. 74 and n. 15. Cf. p. 93, n. 84.

According to a rabbinic tradition, God's revelation at Mount Sinai was so overwhelming that the people of Israel died momentarily and had to be revived. See above, note 258. On the animating power of dew, see BT *Shabbat* 88b; above, note 334.

According to another rabbinic tradition, thirteen rivers of balsam await the righteous in the world that is coming. Here, the rivers turn into mountains.

On the rivers of balsam, see JT *Avodah Zarah* 3:1, 42c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 62:2; BT *Ta'anit* 25a; *Zohar* 1:4b, 7a, 88a (*ST*), 176a; 2:127a, 146b; 3:181a. On the mountains of balsam, see *Zohar* 1:35a; 2:15a (*MhN*), 87b, 175b, 200b–201a; 3:67a, 91a, 144b (*IR*). Cf. the *mountains of spices* in Song of Songs 8:14.

The description of the word flying and engraving itself on the tablets derives from *Maḥazor Vitri*, 337. See Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 117. Cf. *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:2; *ZḤ* 41b–c.

342. **Every word was filled…** Each word of the Ten Commandments uttered by God was filled with meaning and mystery.

See JT *Sheqalim* 6:2, 49d; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:14.

“A treasure ship” renders אסקופא (*isquppa*), which may mean both “yard of a ship” and “threshold.” Cf. Greek *skaphe*, and אסקפא (*isqapha*), “skiff, light boat.” The image here may derive from *Midrash Mishlei* 31:14, where Joseph is compared to “a ship filled with all the finest of the world.”

In *ZḤ* 3a (*MhN*), *isquppa* refers to the “threshold” beneath which household valuables were buried. See BT *Berakhot* 18b; Rashi on BT *Mo’ed Qatan* 11a, s.v. *tsinnor;* idem on Joshua 24:26.

See *Zohar* 1:46b, 67a; 3:69a; *ZḤ* 88c (*MhN, Rut*); *Bei’ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 173; *DE*; *NO*; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 165, 388, n. 47; Lieberman, *Tosefta ki-Fshutah*, 10:369–70.

343. **seventy branches… fifty crowns minus one…** Seventy ענפין (*anfin*), “branches,” is a play on seventy אנפין (*anpin*), “faces” of Torah. The image of forty-nine crowns derives from the forty-nine aspects of “impure” and forty-nine aspects of “pure” in Torah—namely, forty-nine ways by which something can be proven impure (and thus forbidden) and forty-nine ways by which the same thing can be proven pure (and thus permitted).

On the seventy faces of Torah, see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:16, where Torah is compared to wine: “Just as יין (*yayin*), wine, is numerically equivalent to seventy, so Torah assumes seventy faces.” See *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:354); Vol. 1, p. 257, n. 1167. On the seventy branches, see *Zohar* 2:89a, 92b (*RM*), 133b.

The number seventy appears in the context of revelation in BT *Shabbat* 88b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: “Every utterance emerging from the mouth of Power branched into seventy languages [of humanity].” See

Sefer Ḥanokh (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:116); Ibn Ezra, introduction to Commentary on the Torah; *Zohar* 1:26a (*TZ*), 47b, 54a; 3:160a.

On the forty-nine aspects, see *Midrash Tehillim* 12:4, in the name of Rabbi Yannai: "With every utterance that the blessed Holy One spoke to Moses, He offered forty-nine aspects of 'pure' and forty-nine aspects of 'impure.'"

See *Soferim* 16:5; JT *Sanhedrin* 4:1, 22a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 26:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:2, 4; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:4.

On the image of *a hammer shattering rock*, see *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 20:2: "In the School of Rabbi Yishma'el it was taught: *'Is not My word like fire,' declares YHVH, 'and like a hammer shattering rock?'* Just as a hammer is split into many sparks, so every single utterance issuing from the mouth of the blessed Holy One splits into many meanings."

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 42; BT *Shabbat* 88b (and Rashi and *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *mah pattish*), *Sanhedrin* 34a (and *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *mah pattish*).

344. **Israel saw eye-to-eye...** They saw the divine word directly. See above at notes 276–79: *All of Israel were seeing the voices* (Exodus 20:14).

In its original context, the quotation from Deuteronomy pertains not to Sinai but rather to the establishment of the covenant between God and Israel on the plains of Moab. Moses declares to the Israelites: *Not with you alone do I seal this covenant and this oath, but with whoever is here standing with us today before YHVH our God and with whoever is not here with us today*. According to a midrashic interpretation, Moses is actually describing the revelation at Sinai and indicating that the souls of all future generations are also present, even though physically they are *not here with us today*.

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 41; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 11, *Pequdei* 3, *Nitsavim* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Nitsavim* 3; *Zohar* 1:91a. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 146a; *Shemot Rabbah* 28:6. On

seeing “eye-to-eye,” see above, p. 319, n. 425. On each soul receiving her own fitting revelation, see *Shemot Rabbah* 28:6; cf. above, note 304.

345. **אלהים (*Elohim*), *God*—*Gevurah*** The name *Elohim* is associated with *Gevurah*, the divine left hand, by which Torah was given.

See above, p. 439 and n. 262, p. 441 and nn. 269–71. The full verse in Exodus reads: *God spoke all these words saying*.

346. **את (*Et*)—merging with the right…** The word את (*et*) amplifies the apparent meaning of a biblical verse. (See above, note 278.) Here, according to Rabbi Shim’on, *et* implies that in the giving of the Torah the left hand (*Gevurah*, or *Din*) merged with the right hand (*Ḥesed*), thereby balancing Judgment and Love. In the verse in Genesis, the first et alludes to *Ḥesed*, the divine right hand, and the second to *Gevurah*, the left hand. The verse in Isaiah implies that with His right hand God *spread out heaven* (symbolizing *Tif’eret*), and with His left hand *founded earth* (symbolizing *Shekhinah*).

Since the verse in Isaiah mentions both *hand* and *right hand*, it is assumed that *hand* denotes the left hand. See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 18; *Zohar* 1:30a; 2:20a (*MhN*), 37a, 85b. The full verse in Genesis reads: *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*. See above, note 279.

347. ***All*—encompassing other crowns** Other *sefirot*.

348. ***These*—all those meanings…** The word *these* includes all the potential meanings of the divine words. See above, p. 462 and n. 342.

349. ***Saying*—to be a heritage…** The word *saying* implies that these words should be conveyed to future generations.

350. **Now, you might say, ‘To reveal…’** One might assume that *saying* implies that all aspects of the divine words (including their esoteric meaning) should be revealed to others. However, the next verse implies that just

as God is hidden, so should the deepest meaning of His words remain hidden in the minds of those who know.

On guarding the secrets, see *Zohar* 3:73a, 128a (*IR*).

351. **Alternatively, אלהים (*Elohim*), *God, spoke*—one…** The opening two words of the verse refer to one *sefirah* (apparently, *Binah*); the subsequent five words allude to five other *sefirot* (perhaps *Ḥesed* through *Hod*).

Cf. the reference to five voices, above, note 299. See *OY*; Galante; *MmD*.

352. **את (*Et*)—the right. *All*—this and that** *Et* alludes to *Ḥesed*, on the right. (See above, note 346.) *All* refers to the totality of right and left (*Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*), which are combined in *Tif'eret*.

353. ***All*—including Abraham…** This word signifies Abraham (as indicated by the verse in Genesis) and his *sefirah, Ḥesed*.

354. **other, covered crowns** Apparently, *Gevurah* and *Tif'eret*.

355. ***These*—those that are revealed…** The following sefirotic triad, which is more revealed: *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*.

On the verse in Exodus, see above, pp. 442–44 and nn. 276, 278.

356. ***Saying…If a man divorces his wife*** The word *saying* alludes to a woman, or wife, based on the verse in Jeremiah (where *saying* and *wife* appear near each other). In Exodus 20:1, *saying* alludes to *Shekhinah*, the divine wife, who is praised in Proverbs.

For the midrashic basis of this interpretation of *saying*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:6, where the basic laws of morality are derived from God's command to Adam in the Garden of Eden: "*YHVH Elohim commanded the human, saying, 'From every tree of the garden you may surely eat'* (Genesis 2:16). Rabbi Levi said, 'He issued him six commands. He *commanded*, concerning idolatry…; *YHVH*, concerning blasphemy…; *Elohim*, these are the judges…; *the human*, this is murder…; *saying*, concerning גלוי עריות (*gillui arayot*),

exposing nudity (fornication) [as shown by analogy from this proof-text]: *Saying: If a man divorces his wife* (Jeremiah 3:1); *From every tree of the garden you may surely eat*, commanding him concerning theft.'"

Here Rabbi Yitsḥak alters the interpretation of the word *saying* from "concerning fornication" (based on the verse *Saying: If a man divorces his wife*) to simply "(concerning) a wife," namely, the divine wife.

See BT *Sanhedrin* 56a–b; *Zohar* 1:35b–36a, 60a; 2:239b; 3:27a.

357. **whoever engages in Torah is saved from another fire...** By engaging in Torah, which was given in fire and darkness, Israel is saved from the fire of Hell and the darkness of subjugation in exile.

Abraham's statement—"With two knots, words are not erected!"—apparently means that if his descendants are bound and tormented by both of these punishments (Hell and subjugation to the nations), God's promise of deliverance (or the words of Torah) will be not be fulfilled. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *DE*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

Rabbi Yitsḥak's teaching derives from midrashic sources, which focus not on the verse in Deuteronomy 4 but rather on a passage in Genesis describing a manifestation to Abraham: *(As the sun was setting, there was darkness) and here, a smoking oven and a fiery torch*... (Genesis 15:17).

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 44:21; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:2; *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pequdei* 5; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15; *Shemot Rabbah* 51:7; *Midrash Tehillim* 52:8; *Zohar* 3:299a. Cf. *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 9.

The full verse in Deuteronomy 32 reads: *How could one pursue a thousand, or two put a myriad to flight, unless their Rock had sold them and YHVH had given them up?* Here, the point is that Abraham sold out his descendants by

consigning them to subjugation, while God gave them up by agreeing to this arrangement.

The verse in Isaiah reads: *Look to the rock from which you were hewn, to the quarry from which you were dug*. The following verse reads: *Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you*.

358. **fifty days…Jubilee…** According to tradition, Israel departed from Egypt on the fifteenth of Nisan and received the Torah on the sixth of Sivan, spanning a period of fifty days. Rabbi Yehudah explains that these fifty days correspond to the fifty years of the Jubilee. Rabbi Shim'on indicates that Jubilee designates *Binah*, who brought Israel out of Egypt. Actually, *Binah* did not act directly; rather Judgment, issuing from Her and appearing through *Shekhinah*, attacked the Egyptians and liberated the Israelites.

According to the Bible, every seventh year is a Sabbatical, during which the land must lie fallow and at the end of which all debts are remitted (Leviticus 25:1–24; Deuteronomy 15:1–3). After seven Sabbaticals comes the Jubilee, proclaimed every fifty years, when slaves are released and land reverts to its original owner (Leviticus 25:8–55).

In Kabbalah the Jubilee symbolizes *Binah*, who in general is characterized by the number fifty, based on BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, where Rav and Shemu'el teach: "Fifty gates of בינה (*binah*), understanding, were created in the world, all of which were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)." As Jubilee, *Binah* is the source of liberation, including the liberation from Egyptian bondage.

On *Binah* and the Exodus, and the significance of the fifty days from the Exodus to Sinai, see above, p. 215 and n. 55. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim a release in the land to all of its inhabitants. A jubilee it shall be for you, and you shall go*

back each man to his holding and each man to his clan, you shall go back.

359. **judgments against Egypt and all those praises…** fifty times… These fifty references to the Exodus correspond to the fifty years of the Jubilee and to the fifty gates of *Binah*, who is the source of all liberation.

Actually, the Exodus is referred to more than fifty times in the Torah, but according to one enumeration there are fifty instances in which God says to remind Israel of the Exodus. See below at note 403; *Zohar* 1:261b (*Hash*); *ZḤ* 31a; *TZ* 6, 22a; 30, 74b; 32, 76b; 39, 79b; Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim* 13:1–2; *OY*; *OH*, 99b; *NZ* on *Zohar* 2:85b, n. 2; ibid., in *ZḤ*, 124b–d; *MmD*.

360. **Torah, which comes in *Gevurah*…** All the lower *sefirot* issue from *Binah*, beginning with the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. Torah was given by *Gevurah* (God's left hand), but the left was balanced by the right (*Ḥesed*).

On Torah being given by or through *Gevurah*, see above, p. 439 and n. 262, p. 441 and nn. 269–71. The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *YHVH from Sinai appeared and from Seir He shone upon them; He radiated from Mount Paran and He came from myriads of holy ones; from His right hand, a fiery law for them*.

361. **There were five voices…** Issuing at Sinai.

The continuation here may mean "and all of the Ten Commandments (symbolizing the ten *sefirot*) appeared in these voices, blending with them, adorned with *Binah*." See *OY*; Galante; *MmD*. For another interpretation, see *MM*.

On the Torah being given in five voices (based on multiple references to *voice* and *voices* in Exodus 19:16, 19), see BT *Berakhot* 6b; above, note 299.

362. **Jubilee crowned the blessed Holy One…** *Binah* (the Divine Mother) crowned *Tif'eret* (the blessed Holy One).

The verse in Song of Songs concludes: *on the day of his wedding, on the day of his heart's delight*. In Kabbalah this verse alludes to the wedding of *Tif'eret* (symbolized by

Solomon) with *Shekhinah*, in which *Binah* (*his mother*) participates and rejoices.

See M *Ta'anit* 4:8: "*On the day of his wedding*—this is the giving of the Torah [when God was wedded to the people of Israel]. *On the day of his heart's delight*—this is the building of the Temple, may it be rebuilt speedily in our days. Amen."

See *Sifra, Shemini, millu'im*, 15, 44c; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 33; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; Naḥmanides on Genesis 24:1; *Zohar* 1:29b, 218a, 246a, 248b; 2:22a, 58a, 100b; 3:61b.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *He settles the barren woman in her home as a joyous mother of children. Hallelujah!* See *Zohar* 1:157b–158a, 219a.

363. ***Your father and mother will rejoice…*** Alluding to *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, the divine parents of *Tif'eret*.

The interpretation of *father and mother* as divine parents probably derives from BT *Berakhot* 35b: "Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa said, 'Whoever enjoys this world without reciting a blessing—it is as if he robs the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel, as is said: *He who robs his father and mother and says, "It is no crime," is partner to a destroyer* (Proverbs 28:24)—*father* is none other than the blessed Holy One… and *mother* is none other than Assembly of Israel.'"

In this Talmudic passage, Assembly of Israel apparently refers to a supernal hypostasis (the mother of Israel), as it does regularly in Kabbalah, designating *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 3:44b; Idel, *Kabbalah and Eros*, 27. Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, the couple mentioned in Proverbs 23—*Your father and mother will rejoice*—alludes to *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. See 3:55a, 61b, 119a, 156a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 217, 349 (and Wolfson's notes). Cf. *Zohar* 2:85a, 90a; 3:74a, 197b, 213a, 277b (*RM*).

The verse in Proverbs 23 concludes: *she who bore you will exult*.

364. ***Your father's nakedness…*** In this verse the idiom לגלות ערוה (*le-gallot ervah*), "to expose nakedness," means to have sexual relations. Here, though, "exposing nakedness" apparently refers to a disruption of the union between *Binah* and Her partner, *Ḥokhmah*, which is caused by human sin.

See *Zohar* 1:219a (Vol. 3, p. 323, n. 121); 2:176a (precisely the same wording as here, though referring to *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*), 176b (*SdTs*), 177b (*SdTs*); 3:15b, 74a–75a (referring to *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 348–49 (referring to *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*); *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *MmD*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1367–68.

365. **the mountain trembled… all the other mountains…** See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 41; Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:16.

The verses in Psalms read: *What troubles you, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back? O mountains, that you leap like rams? O hills, like lambs? At the presence of the Lord, tremble, O earth, at the presence of the God of Jacob*.

366. ***At the presence of the Lord…*** **Mother…** Referring to *Binah*, who is both *Lord* and Divine Mother. Jacob symbolizes *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel), Her *son*, whom She crowns. See above, note 362.

367. **What is בעטרה (*ba-atarah*), *upon the crown*?…** *Tif'eret* is crowned and encircled by all the various divine colors, in particular the colors of the sefirotic triad *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*.

On these three colors, see above, p. 321, n. 432.

368. **What is *the crown*?…** *Binah* crowns and glorifies *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty, or Glory, of Israel), yet She Herself is thereby glorified.

The first verse in Isaiah reads: *You are My servant, Israel, in whom* אתפאר (*etpa'ar*), *I glory*. This final word alludes to its cognate noun, תפארת (*Tif'eret*), which appears in

the second verse: ובית תפארתי אפאר (*u-veit tif'arti afa'er*), *I will glorify My glorious house*.

See above, note 223. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

369. **Torah was given in black fire upon white fire...** Rabbi Yitsḥak interprets this traditional image in sefirotic terms. Black symbolizes *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment), on the left, through which Torah was revealed to Israel; but this divine aspect merged with the white of *Ḥesed* (Love) on the right, thereby alleviating the rigor of Judgment.

The image of black fire on white fire is attributed to Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish. See JT *Sheqalim* 6:2, 49d; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:12; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 89; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:12; *Zohar* 2:226b; 3:132a (*IR*), 154b. On the verse in Deuteronomy, see above, p. 441 and n. 271; p. 466 and n. 360.

370. **wafting all fragrant aromas...** On the fragrance of the revelation at Sinai, see BT *Shabbat* 88b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi: "With every single utterance issuing from the mouth of the blessed Holy One, the whole world was filled with spices."

The colors white, black, and red apparently symbolize *Ḥesed, Shekhinah*, and *Gevurah*, respectively. According to *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on the verse, *myrrh* and *frankincense* symbolize respectively Abraham and Isaac, who are linked with *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. *All powders of the merchant* can allude to *Shekhinah*, who combines all the various divine qualities. The full verse reads: *Who is this rising from the wilderness like columns of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?* See *Zohar* 1:10b, 176b; 2:37b, 117a (*RM*).

371. **That smoke, who was it?...** The verse in Song of Songs links *columns of smoke* with זאת (*zot*), *this*—one of the names of *Shekhinah*.

On this verse, see the end of the preceding note. On *Shekhinah* as *zot*, see above, p. 170, n. 108; p. 251, n. 194.

372. **Why do you need all this?...** It is unnecessary to quote and interpret a verse from Song of Songs in order to demonstrate that *Shekhinah* appeared in the smoke at Sinai, since a verse in Exodus itself indicates this. Apparently, Rabbi Yehudah understands *Mount Sinai* (or *fire*) as symbolizing *Shekhinah*.

See below, note 422; *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *MmD*.

373. **When letters were engraved...** According to a rabbinic tradition, the engraving of the tablets of the Ten Commandments penetrated right through from one side to the other. Another tradition relates that these tablets were of sapphire.

On the engraving completely penetrating the tablets, see BT *Shabbat* 104a; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 32:15, n. 160. On the tablets of sapphire, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 101; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:14; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 9:11; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 29. On the image of fire on the sapphire tablets, see *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 32:16. On the image of black fire on white fire, see above, note 369.

374. **tablets were in their natural form...** According to Rabbi Abba, apparently, the tablets were not penetrated or pierced; rather, letters of fire appeared upon them in white and black, symbolizing right and left. Although the verse in Deuteronomy seems to indicate that Torah was given solely from the right, actually it issued from the left and was included in the right.

See above, notes 271, 360, 369. The feminine figure in the verse from Proverbs is Wisdom, which in rabbinic literature is equated with Torah. On this verse, see *Avot* 6:7; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 48; *Bereshit Rabbah* 59:2; BT *Shabbat* 63a; Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *la-maiminin, la-masme'ilin bah;* *Zohar* 1:184b–185a, 189b–190a. For various interpretations of Rabbi Abba's view, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

375. ***And the tablets, God's work they were…*** According to Rabbi Yehudah, the abbreviated spelling of והלחת (*ve-ha-luḥot*), *and the tablets*—without a ו (*vav*)—indicates that they appeared as one. Thus, although five commandments were engraved on each tablet, those on the left were included in (or parallel to) those on the right.

On the relation between the five commandments on the left and those on the right, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21; below, p. 473 and n. 385; p. 512 and n. 533. The full verse in Exodus reads: *And the tablets, God's work they were, and the writing, God's writing it was, engraved upon the tablets*.

376. **They resembled sapphire…** Rabbi Yehudah contends that the tablets were supernaturally created by God, not fashioned out of any material substance, even of something as precious as sapphire. See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46.

377. **If so, then sapphire…** Rabbi Yitsḥak challenges Rabbi Yehudah: "If you insist that the phrase *God's work* implies something supernatural, then sapphire [and everything else that exists] is not His work!" See Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:66.

378. ***They were*—precisely!** According to Rabbi Yehudah, this wording indicates that these very tablets were specially created by God.

379. ***the tablets*, not *the stones*** Rabbi Yitsḥak insists that the stones were of a material (though precious) nature; only their fashioning into tablets was supernatural, when God "blew upon them with a wind and they were smoothened and carved into two tablets" (above, after note 375).

380. **It is all!…** Rabbi Shim'on insists that the phrase *God's work* applies to both the actual stones (as taught by Rabbi Yehudah) and their fashioning into tablets (as taught by Rabbi Yitsḥak). However, they originated long before the revelation at Sinai: the two tablets were among the things

brought into being at the end of the week of Creation, "on Sabbath eve at twilight."

See M *Avot* 5:6; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 37; *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:32; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 355; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:21; BT *Pesaḥim* 54a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 19, 46. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

381. **from that supernal dew…** Emanating from *Keter* (the Holy Ancient One) through the *sefirot* to *Shekhinah*, the Holy Apple Orchard.

See above, note 334. The image of the apple orchard derives from an interpretation of Genesis 27:27: *He* [Isaac] *smelled the fragrance of his* [Jacob's] *garments and blessed him and said, "See, the fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH."* See BT *Ta'anit* 29b in the name of Rav: *"Like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH…*. Like the fragrance of a field of apple trees."

In Kabbalah the apple orchard symbolizes *Shekhinah*. She is filled with apple trees, namely, the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who are symbolized by the three patriarchs and whose respective colors all appear in the apple: the white pulp, the red skin, and the green stem.

See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 35–37; *Zohar* 1:36a, 85a–b, 122a, 128b, 139a, 142b, 143b, 224b, 249b; 2:60b, 61b; 3:74a, 84a–b, 88a, 133b (*IR*), 135b (*IR*), 286b–287a, 288a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 365.

382. ***The finger of God…* amounts to ten…** The divine finger that engraved the Ten Commandments amounts to ten; thus God's *great hand* amounts to fifty.

This reckoning derives from a midrashic interpretation of the exclamation of the Egyptian soothsayers following the plague of lice: *It is the finger of God!* According to Rabbi Yose the Galilean, *the finger of God* delivered all ten plagues; thus later, at the Red Sea, when *Israel saw the*

great hand that YHVH wielded against Egypt, there must have been an additional fifty plagues!

See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 6; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:31; Passover Haggadah; above, p. 267 and n. 239; p. 272 and n. 259. On the sefirotic symbolism of the ten fingers, see above, note 4.

383. **stones were pierced, visible from both sides…** The engraving penetrated completely through the tablets. See above, p. 470 and n. 373.

384. **From one side, the other side was visible…** Since the engraving penetrated right through the tablets, it was possible to read them from either the front or the back.

On the apparent problem of reading the words backward, see BT *Shabbat* 104a; Rashi and Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 32:15; *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Exodus 32:15; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 32:15, nn. 160–160*, 162.

385. **They were inscribed miraculously…** According to Rabbi El'azar, the divine word did not penetrate the tablets; rather, it was miraculous in a different, incomprehensible way. Five divine voices appeared as five commandments on the right tablet (beginning with *I am YHVH your God*), and similarly on the left (beginning with *You shall not murder*), but those on the left were included in those on the right. Astoundingly, by reading each commandment on the right tablet, one was able to see and read the corresponding commandment on the left, and vice versa.

On the five voices, see BT *Berakhot* 6b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 162; above, notes 299, 361. On the relation between the five commandments on the left and those on the right, see above, p. 470 and n. 375. On the verse in Deuteronomy, see above, p. 441 and n. 271; p. 466 and n. 360; p. 469 and n. 369.

Unlike the view of Rabbi El'azar here, in rabbinic sources the "miraculous" nature of the engraving relates precisely to the complete penetration of the tablets—

specifically to the fact that the two letters ם (*mem*) and ס (*samekh*), although completely closed, did not fall out of the pierced tablets. See BT *Shabbat* 104a; *Leqaḥ Tov* and *Midrash Aggadah*, Exodus 32:15.

386. ***and said to them…*** The phrase does not specify what Moses said, though many commentators assume that it refers to God's warning in the preceding verses not to cross the boundary around Mount Sinai. Rabbi Yitsḥak offers a more imaginative interpretation. See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 4.

387. **Moses told them everything that would happen…** That God would appear to them on the mountain. See Exodus 19:11: *On the third day YHVH will come down before the eyes of all the people on Mount Sinai*. The verse in Exodus 20 introduces the Ten Commandments.

388. **souls of Israel flew away…** According to a rabbinic tradition, God's revelation at Mount Sinai was so overwhelming that the people of Israel died momentarily, leaving the Torah with no one to receive her. Soon, though, they were revived.

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:6; 5:16; BT *Shabbat* 88b; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Shemot Rabbah* 29:4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10:1; above at notes 258, 341.

On the two-thousand-year preexistence of the Torah, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:2; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 19:1; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:24; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 4; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:12; *Bahir* 4 (5); *Zohar* 2:49a, 161a; 3:128a (*IR*), 159a.

The verse in Leviticus 20 reads: *Any man of the Children of Israel and of the sojourners who sojourn in Israel who gives of his seed to Molech shall surely be put to death*. The wording *To the Children of Israel you shall speak* appears several times in the Torah. The verse in Leviticus 25 reads: *For Mine are the Children of Israel as servants; they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt*.

389. ***Solomon sat upon the throne of YHVH…*** The phrase *throne of YHVH* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who serves as a throne for *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*). The *six steps* symbolize six aspects of *Shekhinah*, or angelic camps surrounding Her.

390. **moon assumed fullness…** According to the Midrash, just as the moon does not become full until the fifteenth day of its cycle, so it remained incomplete until the glorious reign of Solomon in the fifteenth generation from Abraham. See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:12, and *Shemot Rabbah* 15:26: "When Solomon appeared, the disk of the moon became full." Here, the moon symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bo* 15; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15; *Zohar* 1:73b–74a, 150a, 223a, 225b, 238a, 243a, 249b–250a; 2:11a, 28b; 3:40b, 61a, 74b, 181b, 297a; *ZḤ* 37d, 83b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 342; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 24, 47.

391. **In the days of Zedekiah…** The last king of Judah, who was blinded by Nebuchadnezzar and exiled to Babylon along with many of the Judeans. Here, he is counted as the sixteenth king after Solomon, symbolizing the complete waning of the moon. *Shekhinah* shares the sufferings of exile.

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bo* 15; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:26; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:14. On the precise list and number of kings (including the ones not listed here: Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin), see 1 Chronicles 3:10–16; *Mattenot Kehunah*, Maharzu, and David Luria on *Shemot Rabbah* 15:26; *Zayit Ra'anan* on *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Exodus 190; *Magen David* on *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, n. 113; Zacuto in *MM*; *NO*.

The verse in Lamentations reads: *He cast down from heaven to earth the splendor of Israel*. Here, Rabbi Abba interprets it to mean *He cast down earth* [symbolizing *Shekhinah*] *from heaven* [symbolizing *Tif'eret*]. See *Zohar* 1:219a, 238a, 242b; 2:175a; 3:59b, 74a. On the verse in Isaiah, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*, add. 6.

392. **When Israel stood at Mount Sinai…** According to midrashic tradition, at Sinai God bent the heavens so that they touched the top of the mountain and the Divine Glory appeared there. Here, *the heavens* and sun both symbolize *Tif'eret*, who approaches and illumines *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon). See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 4, 9; above at notes 200, 262, 308.

Judah, progenitor of the Davidic dynasty, symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom). The word מזרחה (*mizraḥah*), *to the east*, derives from the root זרח (*zrḥ*), "to shine," and here alludes to *Tif'eret*, the rising sun.

Shekhinah is also known by the divine name *El*, so the verse from Hosea implies that Judah received dominion through Her power. On the link between Judah and *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:155b, 235b.

"Royal official" renders רופינוס (*rufinus*), which derives from the Latin *rufus*, "redhaired." The name Rufinus is shared by various early Christian saints, a fourth-century Roman minister, and Tineus Rufus, the second-century governor of Palestine ordered by Emperor Hadrian to crush the Jewish rebellion. In the *Zohar, rufinus* usually refers to a royal official. See 1:148b; 2:37a, 40a, 58b, 68a, 175a. For the medieval Castilian usage, see Corominas, *Diccionario*, s.v. *rufián*. Cf. Aramaic, רופילא (*rufila*), "high official."

393. ***I am YHVH your God*** The verse concludes: *who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of a house of slaves*.

394. ***your father*—the blessed Holy One …*your mother*—Assembly of Israel** This interpretation of *your father* and *your mother* derives from BT *Berakhot* 35b: "Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa said, 'Whoever enjoys this world without reciting a blessing—it is as if he robs the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel, as is said: *He who robs his father and mother and says, "It is no crime," is partner to a destroyer* (Proverbs 28:24)—*father* is none other than the

blessed Holy One… and *mother* is none other than Assembly of Israel.’”

In this Talmudic passage, Assembly of Israel apparently refers to a supernal hypostasis (the mother of Israel), as it does regularly in Kabbalah. Here, Rabbi El’azar indicates that *your father* is *Tif’eret* (known as the blessed Holy One), while *your mother* is *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel). This divine couple engenders souls. See *Zohar* 3:44b, 74a, 213a; above, note 363.

In Kabbalah, *Tif’eret* is known as Written Torah, while *Shekhinah* is known as Oral Torah.

395. ***your father—Ḥokhmah…your mother—Binah…*** Rabbi Yehudah identifies the couple in Proverbs as *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, the ultimate parents. See above, p. 467 and n. 363.

396. **This and that are one…** According to Rabbi Yitsḥak, the interpretations of Rabbi El’azar and Rabbi Yehudah do not conflict. Apparently, since Torah (symbolizing *Tif’eret*) issued from *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom), one can associate Torah with either of these *sefirot*.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:5, in the name of Rabbi Avin: “Torah is an unripe fruit of supernal Wisdom.” See *Zohar* 1:47b; 2:62a, 121a; 3:81a, 182a, 192b; *ZḤ* 15b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 106–8, 326–30. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

397. **Comprising all!…** Torah comprises not just *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, but all of the *sefirot*, including the central triad of *Ḥesed* (Love), *Din* (Judgment), and *Tif’eret*, who is also known as *Raḥamim* (Compassion).

When appearing together, King and *Matronita* usually designate *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*, but here, *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*. מטרוניתא (*Matronita*) is an aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, “matron, married woman, noble lady.”

398. ***I—Shekhinah…*** This pronoun designates *Shekhinah*, who accompanies Israel in exile. See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3:

“When Israel went down to Egypt, *Shekhinah* went down with them, as is said: *I Myself will go down with you to Egypt.*”

See *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 3:8; 15:2; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:16; *Zohar* 1:222a, 226a; 2:4b (*MhN*), all of which quote this verse. Cf. *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14; *Sifrei*, Numbers 84; JT *Ta’anit* 1:1, 64a; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:54; BT *Megillah* 29a.

On אנכי (*anokhi*), *I*, as *Shekhinah* (the realm through which God proclaims “I am”), see *Zohar* 1:89a, 228a; below at notes 410, 554; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 380.

399. ***YHVH your God*—Assembly of Israel…** Usually in the *Zohar*, Assembly of Israel refers to *Shekhinah*, but here Rabbi Yose distinguishes between the two names, the former apparently designating *Binah*, the Divine Mother. The phrase *YHVH your God* refers to Her.

See above, notes 363, 394; *NO*; *MmD*.

400. ***I am*—*Shekhinah*, interrupted by an accent…** Rabbi Yitsḥak divides the clause *I am YHVH your God* into two parts: *I am* [who I am]; *YHVH your God*. He bases this division on the pausal accent sign (*tippeḥa*) beneath the word אנכי (*anokhi*), *I* (or *I am*). This disjunctive exegesis derives from a midrashic interpretation of Jacob’s apparently false claim to Isaac when he sought the blessing of the firstborn: *I am Esau, your firstborn*. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:18, in the name of Rabbi Levi: “אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I am*, to receive the Ten Commandments [which begin with *Anokhi, I am*], but *Esau is your firstborn*.” Here, Rabbi Yitsḥak applies this model to the opening line of the Ten Commandments themselves!

See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 10; Rashi, *Leqaḥ Tov, Sekhel Tov, Midrash Aggadah*, Ibn Ezra, and *Midrash ha-Gadol* on Genesis 27:19; *Zohar* 1:120a–b, 167b; 3:138a (*IR*), 187b; *Minḥat Shai* on Genesis 27:19. See above, note 398.

401. ***YHVH your God*—as is written: *From heaven*…** Whereas the opening word of the Ten Commandments—אנכי

(*anokhi*), *I am*—refers to *Shekhinah*, the following phrase refers to *Tif'eret*, who is known as the blessed Holy One and *heaven*.

402. **אשר (*Asher*), *Who…*** The next word in the first of the Ten Commandments: *I am YHVH your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of a house of slaves*. The relative pronoun אשר (*asher*), *who*, alludes to *Binah*, from whom all the lower *sefirot* issue and whom they acknowledge and מאשרין (*me'ashsherin*), "praise."

On the symbolic meanings of *asher*, see *Zohar* 1:15a, 47b, 49a, 158a, 235b, 244b, 246a; 2:97b; 3:65b.

403. ***Brought you out of the land of Egypt—* Jubilee…** Through the power of *Binah* (who is known as Jubilee), Israel came forth from Egypt. Therefore, the Exodus is mentioned fifty times in the Torah, corresponding to the fifty gates of *Binah* and the fifty years of the Jubilee (when slaves are released). Similarly, fifty days passed between the Exodus and the revelation at Mount Sinai.

See above, p. 466 and nn. 358–59.

404. ***Out of a house of slaves…He struck every firstborn…*** The phrase *house of slaves* alludes to the domain of demonic powers (or "crowns"), represented also by the various Egyptian *firstborn*. Their domain is opposed to the sefirotic house (*Binah* or *Shekhinah*) built by *Ḥokhmah* (*wisdom*).

On the Egyptian *firstborn*, see above, pp. 176–77 and nn. 133, 135–38; p. 295 and n. 346. The full verse in Exodus reads: *It happened in the middle of the night that YHVH struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and every firstborn of the beasts*. On the verse in Proverbs, see *Zohar* 1:29a, 32b, 94b; 3:10b, 78a, 290b–291a (*IZ*).

405. **When *I* was uttered…** When this opening word of the Ten Commandments was spoken, all the first five commandments engraved on the right side of the stone tablets were included in it. Alternatively, "all the

commandments" refers to various commandments linked with this word, or to all of the positive commandments.

See below, p. 520 and n. 558. Cf. *Zohar* 2:25b (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 41c.

406. **All the commandments... are connected with the body of the King...** Each of the commandments of Torah is linked with a particular sefirotic limb. Traditionally, the 248 positive and 365 negative commandments of Torah correspond to the 248 limbs and 365 sinews of the human body. Here, the divine head corresponds to the highest three *sefirot* (*Keter*, *Ḥokhmah*, and *Binah*), the trunk of the body to *Tif'eret*, the hands to *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, the feet to *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*.

On the body of the King, see above, note 308. On the limbs of Torah, see Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 37–39; *Zohar* 1:134b; 2:118a (*RM*), 162b, 165b; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 44–50. On the 248 limbs of the human body (actually joints or bones covered with flesh and sinews), see M *Oholot* 1:8. On the significance of the 248 and 365 commandments, see BT *Makkot* 23b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:1; El'azar ben Judah of Worms, *Peirushei Siddur ha-Tefillah la-Roqeaḥ*, 2:679.

407. **like one who transgresses against the body of the King...** By fulfilling a commandment, a person strengthens the corresponding sefirotic limb; by transgressing a commandment, one impairs the corresponding limb and consequently his misdeed is exposed by that *sefirah*. For example, if a person violates a commandment linked with *Tif'eret* (known as the blessed Holy One and *heaven*), then that *sefirah* condemns him.

On causing a defect above, see BT *Sanhedrin* 74a (in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai); *Zohar* 2:26b; 3:16b, 66a, 79a, 297a–b. On the concept of weakening and strengthening God, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 319; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:12; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:33; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*

25:1; *Zohar* 1:57b, 234b; 2:32b, 64a, 65b. On the verse in Job, see *Zohar* 2:56a; 3:23b, 101a, 285a.

408. ***earth* executes judgment…** Once *Tif'eret* (known as *heaven*) has exposed a person's sin, *Shekhinah* (known as *earth*) punishes him.

409. **Mother and children…** At the time of the revelation at Mount Sinai, *Binah* was totally fulfilled together with Her sefirotic children, specifically Her daughter and son.

410. ***I*…Abraham had a daughter…** According to a rabbinic tradition, Abraham was blessed with a daughter, who is alluded to in Genesis 24:1: *YHVH blessed Abraham* בכל (*ba-kol*), *with everything*—namely, with a daughter whose name was *ba-kol*. In Kabbalah, this daughter is identified with the divine daughter, *Shekhinah*. Abraham, who symbolizes *Ḥesed*, was intimately linked with Her.

See BT *Bava Batra* 16b; *Bahir* 52 (78); Naḥmanides on Genesis 24:1; *Zohar* 1:219a; 2:36a, 37a. On *I* as *Shekhinah*, see above, note 398.

411. ***YHVH your God… My son…*** *Binah*'s son is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel), known by the divine name *YHVH* and identified with Torah, the *tree of life*. On Torah as *tree of life*, see above, p. 321, n. 431.

412. ***Who brought you out…*** Alluding to *Binah*, Divine Mother, through whose power Israel came forth from Egypt. She is known as Jubilee.

See above, p. 466 and nn. 358–59; p. 478 and n. 403. Leviticus 25:12 reads: *It* [or: *She*] *is a jubilee; it* [or: *she*] *shall be holy for you*. Leviticus 25:10 reads in full: *You shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim a release in the land to all of its inhabitants. A jubilee it shall be for you, and you shall go back each man to his holding and each man to his clan, you shall go back*.

413. **If Mother is sitting…** If *Binah* is tranquil, so are Her sefirotic children and consequently all the worlds. However, human sin disrupts the divine harmony,

separating *Binah* from Her children and interrupting the entire flow of blessing.

The context in Deuteronomy (22:6–7) reads: *If a bird's nest happens to be before you on the way, in any tree or on the ground—fledglings or eggs—and the mother crouching over the fledglings or over the eggs, do not take the mother together with the children. Surely send off the mother, and the children you may take for yourself, so that it may go well with you and you will prolong your days*.

Here Rabbi Yose interprets the command *Do not take the mother* על (*al*), *together with, the children* as: *Do not remove the mother al, above, the children*—that is, "Do not, through your sins, cause the Divine Mother to abandon Her sefirotic children," thereby condemning the world to suffering.

See *Zohar* 1:219a (Vol. 3, p. 323, n. 120). On the usual kabbalistic interpretation of the verse in Deuteronomy, see *Bahir* 74 (104–105); Naḥmanides and Recanati on Deuteronomy 22:6; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod, Berakhot* 33b, *Ḥullin* 142a; *Zohar* 1:158a; 2:8a, 93a; 3:254a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 338–39. On separating *Binah* from Her children, see also *Zohar* 2:105a; 3:12a. Cf. above, note 364.

414. **All is the blessed Holy One…** Reacting to the apparent division between *Binah* and the *sefirot* below Her, Rabbi Yitsḥak insists on the unity of all divine qualities.

Cf. *Zohar* 3:290a–b (*IZ*), 291b (*IZ*), 297a. The Reapers of the Field are the kabbalists who harvest the secrets of Torah sprouting in the field of *Shekhinah*. See above, note 225.

415. ***created heaven and earth… made earth and heaven…*** Rabbi El'azar wonders how to reconcile the apparent contradiction: which was created first, heaven or earth? The solution is that God simultaneously formed *heaven* (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) through *Ḥesed* on the right, and formed *earth* (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) through *Gevurah* on the

left. Therefore, first is written *heaven and earth*; then, *earth and heaven*.

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1; JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77c–d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:15; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:1; BT *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Midrash Shemu'el* 5:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 19. The wording "stretched out His right…" derives from *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer*. See above, p. 463 and n. 346.

416. ***heaven*, really… *earth*, really…** The ultimately real *heaven* and *earth*, namely, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. The higher sefirotic realm will issue the flow of emanation to *Tif'eret*, who in turn will convey it to *Shekhinah*.

417. **When this heaven is arrayed…** When *Tif'eret* is endowed with the flow from above, He turns toward His partner, *Shekhinah*, and expresses His passion toward Her through *Yesod*, Righteous One.

Yesod is known as Righteous One, based on the verse quoted here: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*). This literally means *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, but it is understood as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34.

418. **From the head of the King…** From the highest sefirotic realm flows a river of emanation, pouring into *Shekhinah*, who absorbs all and then nourishes heavenly and earthly beings.

See *Zohar* 1:247b. According to the second-century Greek physician Galen, sperm originates in the brain; this theory was common in medieval literature. See *Bahir* 104 (155).

"Smooth members" renders שייפי (*shaifei*). Deriving from a root meaning "to smooth, rub, slip," the word signifies "limbs" in the *Zohar*, perhaps based on the Talmudic expression (BT *Sotah* 7b) על איבריה לשפא (*al eivreih le-shafa*), "each limb entered its socket"—"slipping" into place—or "… entered the casket." Here it can refer to limbs of the human

male uniting with the female, or to the masculine sefirotic limbs uniting with *Shekhinah*.

See *Arukh*, s.v. *shaf*; Rashi, ad loc., and on Job 33:21, citing *Ḥullin* 42b; *Zohar* 3:170a; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 227.

419. **Corresponding to this paradigm…** Just as *Shekhinah* completes the sefirotic decade and receives all, so one who completes the quorum of ten in the synagogue receives a total reward.

See BT *Berakhot* 47b: "Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi said, 'A person should always rise early to go to synagogue so that he will have the merit of being counted in the first ten; since even if a hundred come after him, he receives the reward of them all.' Would you imagine 'the reward of them all'? Say rather: He is given a reward equal to that of them all."

See *Zohar* 1:105a (*MhN*); 2:250a (*Heikh*); 3:126a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 37. Cf. 2:131a–b.

420. ***He bent the heavens and came down…* על (*al*), *upon, Mount Sinai…*** According to a midrashic interpretation, the verse in Psalms means that God bent the heavens so that they touched the top of the mountain and the Divine Glory appeared there. But Rabbi Yitsḥak insists on reading the verse from Exodus hyperliterally: *He came down al, above, Mount Sinai*. He wonders, then: to where exactly did God come down?

On both verses, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 4, 9; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi* on Exodus 19:20; BT *Sukkah* 5a; above, note 392.

421. **He descended His rungs…** Rabbi Yose explains that the masculine divinity descended the sefirotic rungs to reach *Shekhinah* (symbolized by both earth and moon). She was awaiting Him *above Mount Sinai*.

422. **From here: *because YHVH had descended upon it in fire…*** Rabbi Abba quotes a different source to demonstrate the descent of *Tif'eret* and His union with *Shekhinah*. In the verse in Exodus, *YHVH* symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who

descended upon Mount Sinai *in fire*—namely, joining *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by fire (as indicated in the verse from Deuteronomy).

Based on a midrashic interpretation, the expression *And YHVH* in Genesis implies both *Tif'eret* (*YHVH*) as well as *Shekhinah* (indicated by *and*). Here, Rabbi Abba focuses on *Shekhinah* alone (symbolized by earth): She *rained…fire*, which She obtained from *Tif'eret* (symbolized by heaven).

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 51:2 (on the verse in Genesis 19), in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Wherever it is said *And YHVH*, this implies: He and His court." In Kabbalah this court symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who derives from *Din* (Judgment) and pronounces the divine decree, so the phrase *And YHVH* encompasses "He [the divine male, known as *YHVH*] and His court [*Shekhinah*]." See above, p. 218, n. 65; p. 294, n. 339.

On the phrase *a consuming fire* as referring to *Shekhinah*, see BT *Ketubbot* 111b. Exodus 19:18 reads in full: *Mount Sinai was all in smoke because YHVH had descended upon it in fire, and its smoke rose like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly*. Genesis 19:24 reads in full: *And YHVH rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from YHVH out of heaven*.

423. **From here: *Elohim spoke all…*** Rabbi Ḥiyya demonstrates the divine union from this verse, which he apparently takes to mean: *Shekhinah* (known as *Elohim*) conveyed the Ten Commandments through the power of *Tif'eret*, together with *all* the *sefirot* surrounding Him, all of which united with Her.

424. ***You shall have no other gods…*** The full verse reads: *You shall have no other gods* על פני (*al panai*), *beside Me*—literally, *beside My face(s)*.

According to Rabbi Yitsḥak, the expression אלהים אחרים (*elohim aḥerim*), *other gods*, means "other than *Shekhinah*," who is also known as *Elohim*. Similarly, *beside My faces* means "aside from the *sefirot*—the divine faces."

The *sefirot* constitute the divine name, which is identical with the divine essence. See *Zohar* 3:11b, 70a, 93b; above, p. 29, n. 117.

On Rabbi Yitsḥak's interpretation of *other gods* and *beside My faces*, see Jacob ben Sheshet, *Ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon*, 416–17; Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:3; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 20:1, 3; Recanati on Exodus 20:3, 45d. Cf. above, p. 300, n. 359.

425. **blessed Holy One called them אדם (*adam*), human...** The people of Israel cleave to the *sefirot*, which are known as אדם (*adam*), "human," or Primordial Adam; so only they are truly human.

See BT *Yevamot* 60b–61a: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai said, 'The graves of Gentiles do not impart impurity by a tent [i.e., one who stands on or bends over such a grave, thereby constituting a tent with his body, is not rendered impure], as is said: *You, My flock, flock of My pasture, are human* [*and I am Your God*] (Ezekiel 34:31). You are called *human;* Gentiles are not called *human*.'"

In this Talmudic passage, Rabbi Shim'on assumes a connection between *human* and "impurity by a tent," based on the wording of Numbers 19:14: *When a human dies in a tent, anyone entering the tent and anyone in the tent will be impure seven days*. See *Zohar* 1:20b, 131a; 2:25b (*Piq*); 3:219a; *ZḤ* 78d (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 48a.

On the divine significance of *adam*, see Genesis 1:26–27; Ezekiel 1:26; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 28–92 (passim).

The verse in Leviticus reads: *When a person among you brings an offering to YHVH, of animals from herd and from flock you shall bring your offering*. The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *You, cleaving to YHVH your God are alive every one of you today!*

426. **When an Israelite son is circumcised...** Through circumcision, a male Jew enters not only the Abrahamic covenant but its divine archetype, the *sefirah* of

Yesod, which is known as *all* (since it includes the entire flow of emanation). Thus, he begins to enter the core of the *sefirot*, known as *adam* (see the preceding note). Through fulfilling the other commandments of Torah, he enters further and cleaves to *Tif'eret*, known as body of the King.

After Abraham was circumcised, he proceeded from the rung of *Yesod* to his particular rung, *Ḥesed*, as indicated by the verse in Micah: *You give truth to Jacob*, חסד (*ḥesed*), *loving-kindness, to Abraham*.

See Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 340. On the significance of circumcision, see *Zohar* 1:59b, 89a, 95a–b, 216a; 3:166a. On the body of the King, see *Zohar* 1:216a; above, notes 308, 406.

427. **Ishmael…פרא אדם (*pere adam*), *a wild ass of a human*…** Abraham's son Ishmael was circumcised, so he entered *Yesod*—known as *all*—thereby attaining the beginnings of *adam, a human*. However, since he did not fulfill the other commandments of Torah, he remained incomplete, never attaining a higher sefirotic level and never becoming a complete *adam*.

See Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 340–41; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 27. Liebes has suggested that here פרא (*pere*), *wild ass*, alludes to פריעה (*peri'ah*), "uncovering" the corona of the penis, the second stage of ritual circumcision (following the removal of the foreskin). Muslims (spiritual descendants of Ishmael) do not require this second stage, which according to Jewish tradition is essential. See *OY*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 49; idem, "Zakka'in Innun Yisra'el," at n. 52; Kiener, "The Image of Islam in the *Zohar*," 54–60; above, pp. 304–5, n. 375. Cf. Vital.

Some commentators associate פרא (*pere*) with פארה (*porah*), "branch"; thus, Ishmael was only *a branch of a human*, attaining only one branch of the sefirotic tree. See *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *MmD*. The full verse in Genesis 16 reads: *He will be a wild ass of a human, his hand* בכל (ba-kol), *against* [literally: *in*] *all, hand of all against him; in the*

presence of all his brothers will he dwell. On the verse in Deuteronomy, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 312.

428. **All faces are permitted…** Exodus 20:4–5 forbids the making and worship of any image: *You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any form of what is in the heavens above or what is on the earth below or what is in the waters beneath the earth. You shall not bow down to them and you shall not worship them*. According to a rabbinic tradition, "[Representations of] all faces are permitted except [that of] a human face." See BT *Avodah Zarah* 42b, 43b. Cf. *Tosefta Avodah Zarah* 5:2.

429. **When formed…** The representation of a human face resembles the perfect divine archetype on which the human is modeled. Forming such a representation shows disrespect for God's unique and infinite nature by attempting to depict or delimit it.

See above, note 425. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *DE*; *NZ*; Sullam; *MmD*.

430. **His intermingling with spirit appears in a form** A typically enigmatic Zoharic saying, perhaps meaning "Even a material representation of a person succeeds in conveying the divine spirit within him."

For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *DE*; *MM*; *NO*; Hyman, *Beit Va'ad la-Ḥakhamim*, 41; *Sullam*; Scholem; *MmD*.

431. **from Cappadocia to Lydda…** This itinerary recurs frequently in the *Zohar*. See above, p. 128, n. 217.

432. ***He will be a wild ass…*** The full verse reads: *He will be a wild ass of a human, his hand against all, hand of all against him*; על פני (*al penei*), *in the presence of* [or: *in despite of, in hostility toward*], *all his brothers will he dwell*. See above at note 427.

433. **I have not heard and I will not say…** Following the principle expressed by Rabbi Shim'on (in *Zohar* 1:5a): "I beg of you not to utter a word of Torah that you do not know and have not heard fittingly from a lofty tree [i.e., a

recognized authority].” Moses, referred to here by Rabbi Ḥizkiyah, stands for such an authority or for one’s teacher.

See *Kallah Rabbati*, 2; *Zohar* 2:37a, 151b, 153a; 3:76a–b, 207b, 240b; below at note 456; and BT *Berakhot* 27b, in the name of Rabbi Eli’ezer: “One who says something that he has not heard from his teacher causes *Shekhinah* to depart from Israel.”

This conservative attitude contrasts with the *Zohar*’s frequent emphasis on innovation. See *OY*; Matt, “New-Ancient Words,” 194–204. Cf. Isaac of Acre, *Me’irat Einayim*, 118; and the striking formulations of Jacob ben Sheshet (*Ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon*, 364, 370): “It is a *mitsvah* for every wise person to innovate in Torah according to his capacity…. Do not think that this is farfetched. If I had not invented it in my mind, I would say that it was transmitted to Moses at Sinai.”

434. ***For she is*** חייך **(*ḥayyekha*), *your life…*** Rabbi Yehudah understands *she* as referring to Torah. The verse actually reads: *He* [or: *that*] *is your life…*, referring either to God or to loving, heeding, and cleaving to Him (mentioned immediately before). The substitution of היא (*hi*), *she*, for הוא (*hu*), *He* (or *that*), in this verse appears elsewhere, e.g., in *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 2; B, 31; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 15, *Ki Tissa* 15, *Shemini* 11; *Zohar* 1:92a, 168a, 244b; 2:62a. Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi* on the verse; BT *Qiddushin* 40a. See above, p. 334, n. 483.

435. **if we could not enter this verse…** “If we could not comprehend the conclusion of the verse in Genesis 16, whose beginning Rabbi Shim’on already explained.” See above at note 432.

On the liberating effects of Rabbi Shim’on’s presence, see *Zohar* 3:79a, 105b.

436. ***He held back some of the spirit…*** The verse describes God’s revelation to Moses and the elders: *YHVH came down in a cloud and spoke to him, and He held back some of the spirit that was upon him and put it upon the*

seventy men, the elders; and as the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, but did it no more.

According to a midrashic interpretation, Moses' inspiration spread to the elders without itself being diminished, like a lamp lighting many other lamps.

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 93; *Tanḥuma, Beha'alotekha* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beha'alotekha* 22; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:20, 15:19; Rashi, *Leqaḥ Tov*, and *Midrash Aggadah*, Numbers 11:17; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush Eser Sefirot*, 4a; idem, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 118; *Zohar* 3:220a, 288 (*IZ*); *TZ* 19, 40b; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 144–45.

In the *Zohar*, Rabbi Shim'on is often called בוצינא קדישא (*Botsina Qaddisha*), "Holy Lamp." See above, p. 129, n. 219. On the comparison of Rabbi Shim'on to Moses, see Huss, "Ḥakham Adif mi-Navi."

437. **prayer of a poor person transcends them all…** See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 3:2; *Zohar* 1:23b (*TZ*), 168b; 3:195a; above, p. 329 and n. 460.

On the image of prayer crowning God, see *Shemot Rabbah* 21:4: "Rabbi Pinḥas said in the name of Rabbi Me'ir, and Rabbi Yirmeyah said in the name of Rabbi Abba, 'When Israel prays, you do not find them all praying as one, but rather each assembly prays on its own, one after the other. When they have all finished, the angel appointed over prayers gathers all the prayers offered in all the synagogues and fashions them into crowns, which he places on the head of the blessed Holy One.'" See above, p. 308, n. 385.

438. ***When* יעטף (*ya'atof*), *he is faint*…** The root עטף (*atf*) means "to cover (oneself), wrap" and also "to be weak, faint." Rabbi Shim'on indicates that in the verse in Psalms the first meaning cannot apply, since the poor person lacks an extra garment in which to wrap himself. Rather, the word means here *he is faint*, as in the verse from Lamentations.

439. **when other pillars of the world…** The righteous, who sustain the world. See Proverbs 10:25: *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. See above, note 417.

440. **closer to the King than anyone…** See above, p. 329 and n. 460; above, note 437.

On God sometimes listening to prayer and sometimes not, see *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 127; *Tanḥuma, Ha'azinu* 4; *Midrash Ḥaserot vi-Yterot*, 222 (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:310); *Zohar* 1:105b. Cf. BT *Berakhot* 8a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:2.

On the brokenhearted and poor as God's precious "broken vessels," see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 7:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:5; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 11:18; *Zohar* 1:10b; 2:218a; 3:90b; *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 38:1; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1463, nn. 288, 308. Cf. *ZḤ* 77c (*MhN, Rut*).

The verse in Isaiah reads: *I dwell on high, in holiness, and with the crushed and lowly in spirit—reviving the spirit of the lowly, reviving the heart of the crushed*. The verse in Psalm 34 continues: *those crushed in spirit He delivers*.

441. **One who rebukes a poor person rebukes *Shekhinah*…** Who dwells *with the crushed and lowly in spirit* (see the wording in Isaiah at the end of the preceding note).

The poor resemble *Shekhinah*, who has nothing of Her own and is sustained by the other *sefirot*. See *Zohar* 1:168b, 249b; 2:62a; 3:108b, 113b.

The divine Guardian of the poor does not accept a pledge like other judges (if the convicted oppressor cannot pay his fine); rather, He takes the oppressor's life, as indicated by the verse in Proverbs.

442. **Further, he said…** Rabbi Shim'on continues expounding the verse, still unaware that the two rabbis are standing near him. He now associates the word תפלה (*tefillah*), *prayer*, with its related meaning: phylactery. According to rabbinic tradition, God Himself wears tefillin (see Glossary).

In the *Zohar* the *tefillah*, "phylactery," of the hand symbolizes *Shekhinah*, while the *tefillah* of the head symbolizes *Tif'eret*. Here, Rabbi Shim'on apparently identifies תפלה (*tefillah*), *a prayer, of a poor person*, with *Shekhinah*, who is poor (see the preceding note) and symbolized by *tefillah* of the hand; She ascends toward *Tif'eret*, symbolized by *tefillah* of the head.

See *Zohar* 1:168b. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *MM*; *MmD*. On God's tefillin, see BT *Berakhot* 6a; Isaac the Blind, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 4; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 525; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 4; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 3d–4b; *Zohar* 1:13b–14a (Vol. 1, p. 96, n. 720), 141a (Vol. 2, p. 282, n. 186), 147a; 2:62a–b; 3:81a, 140a (*IR*), 262a–263a, 264a, 269a–b, 291a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 235–39; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1161–65.

443. **Rabbi Shim'on turned his head...** Now he notices the two Companions. The "treasure" refers to a profound understanding of Torah.

Note the narrative sketch—"turned his head"—immediately after Rabbi Shim'on's remarks about "*tefillah* of the head."

444. **our Master opened a supernal door...** By explaining the beginning of the verse in Genesis. See above, p. 487 and n. 435.

445. ***He will be a wild ass of a human...*** The full verse reads: *He will be a wild ass of a human, his hand against all, hand of all against him*; על פני (*al penei*), *in the presence of* [or: *in despite of, in hostility toward*], *all his brothers will he dwell*.

446. **All is one matter...** The entire verse conveys a unified meaning.

447. **How many faces upon faces...** God manifests Himself through the holy faces of the *sefirot* and through demonic aspects below.

On the “outer faces,” see *Zohar* 1:21a; above, p. 411 and n. 151. Cf. 3:133b (*IR*).

448. **Happy are Israel…** Who are united with the *sefirot*, the high faces, whereas other nations are united with the demonic aspects.

On the *sefirot* as God’s name, and the unity of God and His Name, see above, p. 483 and n. 424.

449. **all those Egyptians, related to Ishmael…** Ishmael’s mother was Hagar the Egyptian and his wife was Egyptian. See Genesis 16:3; 21:21.

According to Rabbi Shim’on, when Ishmael was circumcised he attained the rung of *Yesod*, as implied by the phrase *his hand* בכל (ba-kol), *in all*—that is, in *Yesod*, known as *all*. (See above, p. 485 and n. 427.) Therefore, he dominated all the demonic *faces* of his many relatives, as implied by the conclusion of the verse, which is now understood hyperliterally: על פני (*al penei*), *above the faces of, all his brothers will he dwell*.

450. **Wine on its lees…** Rabbi Yehudah praises Rabbi Shim’on, whose wisdom resembles wine aging on its sediment (or lees) and who issues profound insights like a bubbling well.

Wine ages best on its sediment, or lees. For the expression “wine on its lees,” see *Zohar* 1:216b; 3:128b (*IR*), 140b (*IR*), 248a. “Hearts of palm” renders קורא (*qura*), “terminal bud (heart) of the date palm,” preserved in the manuscripts O2, O17. Several other manuscripts and the printed editions read קיזרא (*qizra*), whose meaning is unclear. See Luria, *Va-Ye’esof David*, s.v. *qizra*. For various interpretations of Rabbi Yehudah’s saying, see *OY*; *DE*; Soncino; *Sullam*; Scholem; *MmD*.

451. **גר צדק (*ger tsedeq*), convert of Righteousness, and nothing more…** Traditionally, this term refers to a convert who accepts all the laws of Judaism. In the *Zohar*, it implies that such a person is linked with the rung of *Shekhinah*, who is known as צדק (*Tsedeq*), Righteousness, but

ascends no farther on the sefirotic ladder. Rabbi Ḥizkiyah wonders, then, how Ishmael could reach the higher level of *Yesod*, known as *all*.

See BT *Yevamot* 46a–b; Judah Halevi, *Kuzari* 1:27; *Zohar* 1:13a–b, 96a; 2:27a, 70a; 3:14a–b, 168a; above, note 449.

452. **All is linked in oneness…** Apparently implying that *Yesod* and *Shekhinah* are intimately connected, so Ishmael is still linked with "converts of Righteousness." However, Rabbi Shim'on indicates that Ishmael was not a convert, but rather Abraham's son. Like his father, Ishmael was *blessed* by God, and just as Abraham was blessed *with all* (signifying *Yesod*), so Ishmael attained this same rung.

On the verse in Genesis 24, see above, p. 484 and n. 426.

453. **if his relatives are circumcised…** Circumcised converts attain the rung of *Shekhinah*, known as Righteousness. (See above, note 451).

454. ***You shall have no other gods* על פני (*al panai*), *beside My faces*…** Aside from the *sefirot*. See above, p. 483 and n. 424.

455. ***You shall not make*…** The context (Exodus 20:4–5) reads: *You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any form of what is in the heavens above or what is on the earth below or what is in the waters beneath the earth. You shall not bow down to them and you shall not worship them, for I, YHVH your God, am a jealous God*.

According to a rabbinic tradition, "[Representations of] all faces are permitted except [that of] a human face." The human face is modeled on the divine archetype, which has dominion over all and through whose power the human being attains dominion in this world. (See Genesis 1:26–28). Any representation of the human face shows disrespect for God's unique and infinite nature by attempting to depict or delimit it. See above, notes 428–29.

456. **not to derive from Torah what he does not know…** By doing so, one fashions a false Torah and idolizes it.

See *Zohar* 3:127b–128a (*IR*); above, p. 486 and n. 433; below at note 459; Galante; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 23–24.

The phrase "bundle of life" derives from 1 Samuel 25:29: *The soul of my lord will be bound in the bundle of life*. In the *Zohar*, this *bundle* can refer to the celestial Garden of Eden or to *Shekhinah*, source and destination of all souls. See *Zohar* 1:65b, 224b; 2:11a, 36b, 54a, 59a; 3:24b–25a, 70b, 71b, 92a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 123; *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 61 (75–76).

457. **As we have learned from here…** From the continuation of the verse in Ecclesiastes. Rabbi Yehudah may be referring to the soul's eventual presentation of Torah in Paradise: if she utters something that she has not learned from a teacher, God will be angry. See Galante; *MmD*.

458. ***For I, YHVH your God, am a jealous God…*** The verse opens: *You shall not bow down to them and you shall not worship them*. (See above, note 455.) God is jealous for His Name in several senses. One who fashions a representation of a human face arouses God's jealousy for His sefirotic faces, which constitute His Name. One who idolizes his own invented interpretation of Torah arouses God's jealousy for Torah, which also constitutes His Name.

On the human and divine faces, see above, notes 424, 428–29, 447, 455. On Torah as God's Name, see Ezra of Gerona, *Perush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 548; Naḥmanides, introduction to Commentary on the Torah, 6–7; *Zohar* 2:60a, 90b, 124a; 3:13b, 19a, 21a, 35b–36a, 73a, 89b, 98b, 159a, 265b, 298b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 341–42; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 37–44; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1085–86; Idel, "Tefisat ha-Torah."

459. **פסל (*phesel*), *a carved image*…פסל (*Pesol*), *Carve*…** Since the second verse links the verb *pesol*, *carve*, with the revelation of Torah at Sinai, Rabbi Abba interprets the word *pesel* (or *phesel*), *carved image*, in the first verse as also referring to Torah: you shall not carve and invent for yourself a false Torah. One who violates this command and betrays God's Name (Torah) will in turn be betrayed by demonic forces who will steer his soul into Hell.

See above at note 456. The verse in Exodus 34 reads: *Carve yourself two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you smashed*.

460. **must not betray the Name of the blessed Holy One…** According to Rabbi Yitsḥak, the Name is signified by the covenant of circumcision, which is associated with the divine phallus, *Yesod*, joined with *Shekhinah*. One who inserts the covenantal sign of circumcision into the body of a non-Jewish woman betrays the covenantal Name.

See Psalms 44:18; BT *Eruvin* 19a; *Zohar* 1:93a, 131b; 2:3b, 7a, 57b, 61a, 90a; 3:13b–14a, 57b, 142a (*IR*), 266a.

In rabbinic literature, the mark of circumcision is identified with the י (*yod*) of the divine name שדי (*Shaddai*), which is also the initial letter of יהוה (*YHVH*). See *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 14, *Shemini* 8; *Zohar* 1:13a, 56a, 60a, 89a, 93a, 95a–b; 2:3b, 36a, 90a, 216b; 3:13b, 142a (*IR*), 215b, 220a, 256a (*RM*), 266a; Wolfson, "Circumcision and the Divine Name"; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 29–48.

The full verse in Malachi reads: *Judah has broken faith; an abhorrent act has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has desecrated the sanctuary of YHVH, which He loves, and has married the daughter of an alien god*.

461. **From here: *They betrayed YHVH*…** Rabbi Yehudah quotes a different verse to demonstrate that sexual relations with a non-Jew constitute betrayal of the

covenantal Name. The covenant symbolizes *Yesod*, who is linked with *Tif'eret*, known as the blessed Holy One.

He concludes by quoting *You shall not bow down to them*, which here implies that lying down with a foreign woman is an act of betrayal similar and tantamount to idol worship.

See *Zohar* 1:131b, 189b; 2:3b, 61a, 90a, 243a; 3:13b; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*), 78c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 212–13; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 51 (63); Galante. Cf. *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21; below, p. 513 and n. 536. On the verse in Hosea, see *Zohar* 1:93a, 204a; 2:90a.

462. ***And you see among the captives…*** According to this verse, an Israelite male is allowed to marry a woman captured in war. Yet another verse in Deuteronomy states explicitly: *You shall not intermarry*. How can this contradiction be explained?

463. **While they remain under their dominion** The prohibition against intermarrying foreign women applies only as long as they are under the control of non-Israelites; once they have been captured, they are permitted.

Another resolution of the apparent contradiction is that the prohibition against intermarriage applies specifically to the seven peoples of Canaan, whereas Deuteronomy 21 is describing an optional war outside the borders of Canaan. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 211; Rashi on Deuteronomy 21:10; Rashi and *Tosafot* of Sens, BT *Sotah* 35b, s.v. *ve-shavita shivyo*. Here, Rabbi El'azar's reply ("While they remain under their dominion") apparently refers to Canaanite women still under Canaanite control.

464. **Why is this portion adjoined to a *wayward and rebellious son*?…** The passage about marrying a beautiful captive (Deuteronomy 21:10–14) is followed almost immediately by a passage about *a wayward and rebellious son* (ibid., 18–21). According to midrashic tradition, one who marries such a woman is destined to engender such a son.

See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 218; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 21:22; BT *Sanhedrin* 107a; *Devarim Rabbah* 6:4; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 1; *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta* 3; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Deuteronomy 21:18; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 212.

465. **difficult to remove filth…** It is difficult to purify a non-Israelite woman, especially one who has already been married and tainted by a non-Israelite male, since he has injected her with his own aspect of harsh judgment, which merges with hers.

See *Zohar* 3:14b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 212; Vital. On a previously married captive, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 211. On the Midianite women, see Numbers 25:6–18; 31:15–18.

466. **the person who inherits this legacy…** Who inherits this covenantal sign of circumcision and preserves it by not sinning sexually. By fulfilling the commandments of Torah, one cleaves to the divine body.

The souls of Israel derive from the union of *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel), who is also known as *YHVH*.

On the body of the King and cleaving to this body by fulfilling the commandments, see above, notes 308, 406, 426. The verse in Deuteronomy 4 reads: *You, cleaving to YHVH your God, are alive every one of you today!* The verse in Isaiah reads: *You are My servant, Israel, in whom* אתפאר (*etpa'ar*), *I glory*. This final word alludes to its cognate noun, תפארת (*Tif'eret*).

467. ***Elisha said to her…*** In this story, the prophet Elisha performs a miracle for an anonymous poor woman, providing her with an abundant supply of oil.

On the need for the table not to be empty when one recites the Grace after Meals, see BT *Sanhedrin* 92a, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Whoever does not leave bread on his table [when reciting the Grace after Meals] will never see a sign of blessing."

See Naḥmanides on Exodus 25:24; *Zohar* 1:88a, 240a, 250a; 2:63b, 67a, 88a, 153b, 155a, 157b; 3:34a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 270; Galante; *MM*; *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 180:2; *Magen Avraham*, ad loc.; Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*, 48; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 28; idem, *Minhag Ashkenaz ha-Qadmon*, 267–70.

Cf. BT *Berakhot* 40a: "Come and see how the character of the blessed Holy One differs from that of flesh and blood. In the case of flesh and blood, an empty vessel holds [more], but not a full one. However, the blessed Holy One is not so: a full vessel holds [more], but not an empty one."

The concluding phrase—"blessing emptily"—alludes to Exodus 20:7: *You shall not take the name of YHVH your God in vain*.

468. ***a good name from fine oil…*** The simple sense of the verse is *A good name is* משמן טוב (*mi-shemen tov*), *better than fine oil*, but Rabbi Shim'on renders *mi-shemen tov* hyperliterally: *from fine oil*. The *good name* alludes to the Divine Name, *YHVH*, which issues from the precious flow of

emanation originating in the highest realms of divinity, to kindle the various sefirotic lamps. The flow of oil is also pictured as a river issuing from *Ḥokhmah* (*Eden*) to water *the garden* of *Shekhinah*.

On the association of oil with *Ḥokhmah*, see *Zohar* 1:240a; 3:34a, 39a. On the possible connection between "kindling" and the root טוב (*tov*), "*good, fine*," see *OY*; Vol. 3, p. 387, n. 428; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1194, n. 240.

469. ***like precious oil on the head...*** The verse concludes: *running down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron, descending over the collar of* מדותיו (*middotav*), *his robes*. In the *Zohar* this verse alludes to the flow of emanation from the divine head to the *sefirot* below, which are known as מדות (*middot*), "attributes." See *Zohar* 3:7b, 34a, 39a, 88b–89a, 132a (*IR*), 209a, 295b (*IZ*).

470. **mountains of pure balsam** According to a rabbinic tradition, thirteen rivers of balsam await the righteous in the world that is coming. Here, the rivers turn into mountains, representing the sefirotic heights. See above, note 341.

471. **supernal Name of holy lamps...** The sefirotic Name, illuminated by the oil of emanation.

On the *sefirot* as God's name, see above, p. 29, n. 117; p. 483 and n. 424. "Emptily" alludes to Exodus 20:7: *You shall not take the name of YHVH your God in vain*. See above, end of note 467.

472. **mention the Holy Name only after another word...** Which can accompany or clothe the Name. Similarly, the Torah begins: בראשית ברא אלהים (*Be-reshit bara Elohim*), *In the beginning, God created*, rather than בראשית אלהים ברא (*Elohim bara be-reshit*), *God created in the beginning*.

See *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:3; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:12; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 1, *Ki Tissa* 15; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 4; *Midrash Tehillim* 18:29; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Genesis 1:1. Cf. *Sifra, Vayiqra, dibbura dindavah* 2:4, 4c; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 306; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:13; BT

Nedarim 10a-b; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 6; *Tosefot Yeshanim, Yoma* 39a, s.v. *ve-omer*; *NZ*.

473. **only in connection with a complete world…** The name *YHVH* (and the full name *YHVH Elohim*) appears for the first time in the Torah only after the completion of Creation.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:3; 12:15; above, p. 188 and n. 175. (The full name *YHVH Elohim* signifies both Compassion and Judgment.)

The full verse in Genesis reads: *These are the generations of heaven and earth when they were created, on the day that YHVH Elohim made earth and heaven*.

474. **What is blessing? The Holy Name…** Referring to the *sefirot* (see above, note 471) or specifically to *Shekhinah*, who is also known as God's Name.

One who recites a blessing over an empty table is taking God's name *in vain*, since blessing cannot settle upon an empty place. See above, p. 495 and n. 467.

475. ***God blessed the seventh day… there will be none then…*** If God blessed the Sabbath, then why does the verse in Exodus state that the manna in the wilderness did not appear on that day?

476. **All blessings… depend upon the seventh day…** The days of the week correspond to cosmic sefirotic days above. Sunday through Friday symbolize respectively *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, while the Sabbath symbolizes *Binah*, who is the seventh *sefirah*, counting from *Yesod* upward. On each mundane day, the world is nourished by its supernal day, all six of which are blessed by the seventh day, *Binah*. On the Sabbath, no manna appeared, because on this special day the six *sefirot* receive new sustenance for the coming week from *Binah* and nothing yet appears in the world below.

See above, page 344; Galante; *MmD*.

477. **whoever attains the rung of faith…** Each member of Israel, whose souls derive from the sefirotic

realm of faith, should arrange his table on Sabbath eve, so that blessing will be drawn down for the entire week.

On the principle that "no blessing appears on an empty table," see above, note 467.

478. **Even on the Sabbath day…** To maintain the flow of blessing throughout the Sabbath.

On the significance of "even," see *NZ*; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 60–61.

479. **One should delight… eating three meals…** Human delight stimulates delight above, which then prevails below.

On the three Sabbath meals, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:25; BT *Shabbat* 117b–118b; *Zohar* 3:94b–95a; 288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 48c; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1234–36.

480. **To couple with those days above…** By celebrating the Sabbath through these three meals, one joins with the sefirotic days (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*), which are blessed by the seventh day, *Binah*.

The flow of emanation, pictured as dew, descends from *Keter*, known as the Holy Ancient One. This sublime realm is characterized by pure compassion and is described as אנפין אריך (*arikh anpin*), "slow to anger" (an expression deriving from Exodus 34:6). The configuration of *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* through *Yesod* (whose core is *Tif'eret*) is characterized by a tension between opposites: right and left, loving-kindness and judgment. Relative to the highest realm, this configuration is described as זעיר אנפין (*ze'eir anpin*), "short-tempered" (deriving from Proverbs 14:17). The emanated dew gradually reaches *Shekhinah*, the Holy Apple Orchard. See above, notes 334, 381.

The three Sabbath meals correspond to the three sefirotic realms: the Holy Ancient One, the Short-Tempered One, and the Holy Apple Orchard, as explained below. One who omits a meal impairs its corresponding divine aspect;

one who completes all three meals demonstrates and actualizes the entire spectrum of faith.

481. ***Then you will delight*** **על יהוה (*al YHVH*), *above YHVH*—one meal...** Here Rabbi Shim'on follows the order of the verse in Isaiah, not the actual order of the meals, as becomes clear below. He interprets על יהוה (*al YHVH*), *upon YHVH*, hyperliterally as *above YHVH*, alluding to *Keter* (the Holy Ancient One), who is situated *above Tif'eret*, known as *YHVH*. The phrase *upon the heights of the earth* refers to *Shekhinah*, known as *earth*. The phrase *inheritance of your father Jacob* alludes to Jacob's *sefirah, Tif'eret*, the core of the Short-Tempered One.

Whereas each of the festivals represents one particular *sefirah*, the Sabbath includes the divine totality.

On the hyperliteral reading of the verse in Isaiah, see *Zohar* 1:216a, 219a; 2:50b, 83a, 88b; 3:94b.

482. **mentioned three times...** The three references to the Sabbath in Genesis correspond to the three sefirotic configurations: the Holy Ancient One, the Short-Tempered One, and the Holy Apple Orchard.

See *Zohar* 1:47b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 111.

483. **When Rabbi Abba was sitting...** Apparently, he identified the meal of Sabbath eve as the meal of the Holy Ancient One, the meal of Sabbath noon as the meal of the Short-Tempered One (whose core is *Tif'eret*, known as the blessed Holy One), and meal of Sabbath afternoon as the meal of the Holy Apple Orchard (*Shekhinah*). Thus the three meals are arranged according to the flow of emanation from above to below.

484. **Prepare the meal of faith!...** Isaac Luria borrowed this declaration to open each of his three hymns for the Sabbath meals. See Liebes, "Zemirot li-S'udot Shabbat she-Yasad ha-Ari ha-Qadosh."

On the hyperliteral reading *above YHVH*, see above, note 481.

485. **How are these meals arranged?** How do the three meals correspond to the sefirotic configurations?

See above, notes 480–83. On various correspondences between the meals and the *sefirot*, see *Zohar* 3:288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 48c; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 16:25; idem, *Shulḥan shel Arba, Kitvei Rabbeinu Baḥya*, 482; Isaiah Horowitz, *Shenei Luḥot ha-Berit, Massekhet Shabbat*, 102a–b; *MM*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1234–35.

486. **Of Sabbath eve is written…** Rabbi Shim'on explains that the meal of Sabbath eve celebrates the joyous union of *Shekhinah* (known as *earth* and *Matronita*) with Her partner *Tif'eret*. Her whole retinue of angels ("the entire Apple Orchard") shares in Her blessing.

מטרוניתא (*Matronita*) is an aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron, married woman, noble lady," and is often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the Queen.

The image of an additional soul derives from BT *Beitsah* 16a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish: "On Sabbath eve the blessed Holy One imparts an additional soul to a human being. When Sabbath departs it is taken from him." In the *Zohar*, this soul is bestowed by *Shekhinah*.

See *Zohar* 1:48a; 2:135b, 136b, 204a–b; 3:173a, 288b (*IZ*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1230–33; Ginsburg, *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*, 121–36.

487. **Of Sabbath day, the second meal…** The second meal is the meal of the Holy Ancient One, who is situated *above* *YHVH*—that is, above *Tif'eret* (see above, note 481). By delighting in this meal, one actualizes His joy.

488. **Of the third Sabbath meal…** The third meal, eaten on Sabbath afternoon, is the meal of the Short-Tempered One, whose core is *Tif'eret*, symbolized by Jacob (see above, note 481). Now this configuration is fulfilled, and all its six sefirotic components (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*) are blessed, ensuring blessing for the entire week.

The verse in Exodus, describing the Sabbath, reads in full: *Between Me and the Children of Israel it is a sign*

forever that in six days YHVH made heaven and earth and on the seventh day He ceased and was refreshed. On the exclusive relationship between Israel and the Sabbath, see *Mekhilta, Shabbeta (Ki Tissa)* 1; *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:8; BT *Sanhedrin* 58b; *Shemot Rabbah* 25:11; above, p. 345 and n. 519.

489. **children of the King…** Their souls are generated by the royal union of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

490. **inflicted with the severity of three elements…** See BT *Shabbat* 118a, in the name of Bar Kappara: "Whoever fulfills three meals on the Sabbath is saved from three retributions: the birth pangs of the Messiah, the judgment of Hell, and the war of Gog and Magog."

"The birth pangs of the Messiah" refers to times of great distress preceding his advent. Gog and Magog are demonic powers who will wage eschatological war against the righteous and be defeated by God. The concept derives from Ezekiel 38:2.

491. ***the dung of your festivals…*** In Malachi this phrase means "*the dung of your festal offerings*," but Rabbi Shim'on interprets it as "the excrement of your selfish feasting."

This interpretation derives from Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yom Tov* 6:18. See *Zohar* 2:199b; 3:104a. Cf. JT *Mo'ed Qatan* 3:5, 82b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1; BT *Shabbat* 151b; *Zohar* 1:10b.

The verse in Isaiah refers to hypocritical ritual observance. On the phrase *between Me and the Children of Israel*, see above, note 488; *OY*; *MmD*.

492. **all of faith inheres in Sabbath…** Sabbath and its meals comprise the entire sefirotic realm: the Holy Ancient One, the Short-Tempered One, and the Holy Apple Orchard. See above, pp. 498–99 and nn. 480–81.

The additional soul bestowed on the Sabbath enables one to taste the bliss of the world that is coming. On this soul, see above, note 486. On the relation between Sabbath

and the world that is coming, see *Mekhilta, Shabbeta (Ki Tissa)* 1; *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:5; BT *Berakhot* 57b; *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:346). Cf. M *Tamid* 7:4; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 1; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 31a; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 19.

Since the Sabbath comprises all of the *sefirot*, it is identified with the divine name. See *Zohar* 2:128a, 204a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 332–35; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 117; *TZ* 19, 40b; *OY*; Galante; *MmD*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1223–26.

493. **meals encompassing Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...** The three patriarchs symbolize respectively *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. Here, Rabbi Yose may be linking the patriarchs with the three sefirotic configurations: the Holy Ancient One, the Short-Tempered One, and the Holy Apple Orchard. The Holy Ancient One is characterized by pure *Ḥesed*. *Shekhinah* (the Holy Apple Orchard) is characterized by *Din* (Judgment), or *Gevurah*. The core of the Short-Tempered One is *Tif'eret*, symbolized by Jacob.

See *OY*; Galante; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1290; *MmD*.

494. **On this day the patriarchs are crowned...** On Sabbath the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the three patriarchs) are adorned with emanation from above, which they convey to their "children," namely, the lower triad of *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*. Whereas the Sabbath reflects the totality of the *sefirot*, each festival represents just one particular *sefirah*.

On the cessation of the torments of Hell on the Sabbath, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:5; BT *Sanhedrin* 65b; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 33; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23; *Zohar* 1:14b, 17b, 237b; 2:31b, 150b–151a, 203b, 207a; 3:94b, 288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 17a–b (*MhN*).

Torah symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who is adorned on the Sabbath. Correspondingly below, the Torah scroll is bedecked in the

synagogue with ornaments and crowns.

495. **On all six days of the week...** Normally as evening approaches, during the time of the afternoon prayer of *minḥah* (offering), the power of *Din* (Judgment) dominates. However, on Sabbath afternoon, *Keter*—known as the Holy Ancient One and רצון (Will, Favor)—manifests pure favor and grace.

See *Zohar* 1:95b, 132b, 182b, 230a; 2:21a (*MhN*), 36b, 156a; 3:64b, 129a (*IR*), 136a–b (*IR*), 288b (*IZ*), 293a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 87; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:963–64.

496. **Through this will, Moses...departed...** Moses died on Sabbath afternoon during the time of divine favor, and his soul was treasured away in the Divine Will.

On Moses dying on the Sabbath, see BT *Sotah* 13b. On his dying on Sabbath afternoon, see *Tosafot, Menaḥot* 30a, s.v. *mi-kan;* Radak on Joshua 3:2; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margaliot), par. 356 (and Margaliot's n. 2); *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Wistinetzki), par. 1018 (and Wistinetzki's n. 5); Zedekiah ben Abraham Anav, *Shibbolei ha-Leqet*, par. 126; *Zohar* 2:156a; *Sha'arei Teshuvah (Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim)*, 30, 220; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:167–68, n. 966; *NZ*; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 32. Cf. *Zohar* 1:44b (*Heikh*); 2:253b (*Heikh*).

497. **Torah is crowned...** Torah symbolizes *Tif'eret*, the trunk of the cosmic tree. The seventy branches correspond to the seven lower *sefirot* (*Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*), which continue branching out. The five main branches are *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*, surrounding *Tif'eret* (and corresponding to the five books of Torah). "Those gates" are the fifty gates of *Binah*, through which pours divine light.

Seventy ענפין (*anfin*), "branches," is a play on seventy אנפין (*anpin*), "faces" of Torah. See above, note 343. On the gates of *Binah*, see above, note 358. "Streaming light" renders נהורא (*nehora*), "light," a near equivalent of נהרא (*nahara*),

“river,” which appears here in various witnesses (M5, N47, R1; *OY*; Cremona).

498. **supernal holy ones…** קדישי עליונין (*Qaddishei elyonin*), “holy ones of the Most High.” The phrase appears in Daniel 7:18, referring to Israel.

“With three joys, with three patriarchs” refers to the three Sabbath meals, which correspond to the three patriarchs and their respective *sefirot*: *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*. See above, note 493.

On Israel’s exclusive relationship with the Sabbath, see above, note 488.

499. **Surely it is written…** By linking these verses, Rabbi Yehudah connects the observance of, and delight in, Sabbath with Israel’s holiness.

500. **On this day all souls of the righteous…** On Sabbath these souls in paradise enjoy the delights issuing from *Keter*, the Holy Ancient One. From this bliss, a spirit descends to Israel below, providing them with an extra soul.

On the additional Sabbath soul, see above, note 486.

501. **Therefore Sabbath is equivalent to Torah…** Sabbath sparkles with the radiance of Torah (see above at note 497) and its observance is equivalent to the fulfillment of the whole Torah. This equivalence is implied by the wording in Isaiah: by *keeping the Sabbath* one is *keeping his hand from doing any evil*.

On the equivalence of observing Sabbath and fulfilling the entire Torah, see JT *Berakhot* 1:4, 3c; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli’ezer* 20; *Devarim Rabbah* 4:4; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 92; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 33; *Shemot Rabbah* 25:12; *Zohar* 2:47a, 90a, 92a, 151a; *ZḤ* 17b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 335; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110.

502. ***eunuchs…*** In Isaiah this term refers to certain officials at the Babylonian court (including some exiled Judeans) who were castrated. Judeans subject to this fate (and also perhaps foreigners attracted to monotheism) felt

cut off from the Jewish people in the sense that they would have no descendants and that the nation in the future would not include their seed. Isaiah reassures such eunuchs that they nonetheless have an enduring future in the sacred community.

Here Rabbi Yudai wonders who these eunuchs are and how they observe the Sabbath.

503. **Cappadocian! With your donkey?** Rabbi Shim'on scolds Rabbi Yudai for initiating a discussion of Torah before dismounting from his donkey.

See *DE*. On dismounting from a donkey before engaging in esoteric matters, see BT *Ḥagigah* 14b. Cf. *Tosefta Ḥagigah* 2:1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 21:1; JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77a.

The Jerusalem Talmud refers numerous times to Rabbi Yudan the Cappadocian, in one case disproving a statement of his. See JT *Berakhot* 4:1, 7c. According to *ZḤ* 22a (*MhN*), certain Cappadocians are "lacking in good deeds." On Cappadocia in the *Zohar*, see Scholem, "She'elot be-Viqqoret ha-Zohar," 40–46 (and the appended note by S. Klein, 56); above, p. 184, n. 160.

504. **Tie it up by its pommel...** "Pommel" renders טיפסא (*tifsa*), a Zoharic term with a wide range of meaning, here apparently derived from the rabbinic Hebrew תפוס (*tafus*) or תופס (*tofes*), understood to mean "pommel" (the protuberance at the front and top of a saddle).

See *Tosefta Kelim, Bava Batra* 2:7; BT *Eruvin* 27a (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *tafus*); *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *ukkaf;* Lieberman, *Tosefet Rishonim*, 3:76–77; Tishby, *Mishnat ha-Zohar*, 2:637. For other interpretations, see Galante; *DE*; *MM*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David* , s.v. *tifsa*. Cf. *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 178–79, s.v. *tufsa, tifsa*.

505. **a word of Torah requires thirsting clarity** Such mental clarity is difficult while riding a donkey.

"Thirsting clarity" renders צחותא (*tsaḥuta*), which in Aramaic means "thirst," but here alludes to the Hebrew

צחות (*tsaḥut*), “clarity.” See the Talmudic Aramaic saying: “Legal discussion requires צילותא (*tsiluta*), clarity, like a day of the north wind.”

See BT *Eruvin* 65a; *Megillah* 28b; *Targum*, Song of Songs 6:7; *Zohar* 1:72a; 3:23a, 46a, 207b, 221b, 266b; *ZḤ* 13d (*MhN*); Scholem, *Major Trends*, 389, n. 49.

506. **Because of my Master…** Rabbi Yudai insists that he set out on the road in order to meet Rabbi Shim’on, imbibe his words of Torah, and thereby attain a vision of *Shekhinah*.

See JT *Eruvin* 5:1, 22b, in the name of Rabbi Zeira: “Whoever greets his teacher is considered as if he greeted *Shekhinah*.”

507. **This matter has already been established…** On the passage in Isaiah, see BT *Sanhedrin* 93b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 52; *Zohar* 1:187b; 3:82a; *ZḤ* 89c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 250–51; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 141–42; Gikatilla, *Sha’arei Orah*, 21b; Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:2.

508. **Who are *eunuchs*?…** Rabbi Shim’on explains that this refers to the Companions, who act as eunuchs all six days of the week, abstaining from sexual relations with their wives. Then, on Sabbath eve, they unite with their wives, imitating and stimulating the divine union of *Tif’eret* and *Shekhinah*.

The Mishnah (*Ketubbot* 5:6) discusses how often husbands of various professions are required to fulfill the commandment of עונה (*onah*), “conjugal rights,” i.e., to satisfy their wives sexually. According to Rabbi Eli’ezer, “The *onah* mentioned in the Torah [applies as follows] : Those who are unoccupied, every day; laborers, twice a week; donkey-drivers, once a week; camel-drivers, once every thirty days; sailors, once every six months.”

The Talmud (BT *Ketubbot* 62b) adds: “When is the *onah* of the disciples of the wise? [i.e., What is the proper interval between two successive times of fulfilling this *mitsvah*?] Rav

Yehudah said in the name of Shemu'el, 'From one Sabbath eve to the next.'"

See *Zohar* 1:14a–b, 50a, 112a (*MhN*); 2:63b, 136a–b, 204b–205a; 3:49b, 78a, 81a, 82a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1232–33; Wolfson, "Eunuchs Who Keep the Sabbath." Cf. Matthew 19:12. On *Shekhinah*'s title *Matronita*, see above, note 486.

509. **Companions who know this mystery…** By contemplating the union of the divine couple during their own sexual union, they actualize the union above (in the realm of "faith") and draw down procreative blessing.

Rabbi Shim'on interprets the phrase *who keep My Sabbaths* in the sense of "awaiting the arrival of Sabbath" and its opportunity for holy sexual union. The verse in Genesis suggests that Jacob "waited" to see whether Joseph's dream would be fulfilled. See Rashi and Ibn Ezra, ad loc.; *Zohar* 3:82a; Baḥya ben Asher on Leviticus 19:2.

510. ***what I desire*—unspecified…** The verse in Isaiah does not spell out *what I desire*, but according to Rabbi Shim'on this refers to *Tif'eret*'s union with *Shekhinah* on Sabbath eve, which is also the ideal time for human union below.

"All is one" implies that both biblical expressions (*who have chosen what I desire* and *grasp My covenant*) refer to the Sabbath union. *"My covenant*—unspecified" implies that *covenant* refers not simply to God's covenant with Israel but also to *Yesod*, the divine phallus, symbolized by the covenant of circumcision. By uniting with their wives on Sabbath eve, the Companions *grasp* and strengthen *Yesod*, actualizing the union above.

511. ***Six days you shall labor…*** The Companions unite with their wives in pure intention only while *Tif'eret* is "occupied" in uniting with *Shekhinah*, thereby ensuring that their children will issue with pure souls, generated by the Sabbath union of the divine couple. Such offspring are literally *children of YHVH your God*.

See *Zohar* 2:204b–205a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1232–33; *OY*; Galante; *MmD*. The passage in Exodus continues: *you shall not do any work*.

512. **they are called children…** Their offspring, sanctified at conception, are called God's children. For their sake, the sinful world is saved from punishment.

513. ***seed of truth*, precisely…** The souls of these children issue on Sabbath eve from *Tif'eret*, who is known as *truth, Jacob*, and the blessed Holy One.

On truth as the holy signet ring, see BT *Shabbat* 55a, in the name of Rabbi Ḥanina: "The seal of the blessed Holy One is truth."

See JT *Sanhedrin* 1:1, 18a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 81:2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:10; *Shemot Rabbah* 4:3.

514. **whose ways are like beasts…** Copulating on the weekdays with no spiritual intention.

515. **The world consists only of those Companions…** They are the essence of the world.

"The ignorant" renders עמא דארעא (*amma de-ar'a*), equivalent to Hebrew עם הארץ (*am ha-arets*), "people of the land, rural population"; hence, those who are coarse, unrefined, illiterate, ignorant of the Torah and unobservant of certain ritual practices. Various decrees against "the ignorant" appear in BT *Pesaḥim* 49b, including one in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "An *am ha-arets*, it is permitted to stab him even on Yom Kippur that falls on the Sabbath."

Whoredom is apparently construed as referring to Lilith, the demonic whore. Since these children are conceived in an unholy manner on weekdays, when demonic forces prevail, they are contaminated by impurity. See Galante; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1393; *MmD*.

516. **this verse needs to be settled in its paths…** Rabbi Yudai is bothered by the inconsistency between the plural object *(I will give) them* and the singular object *(I will*

give) him. Since the object is *the eunuchs*, both formulations should be in the plural.

517. **What is *My house*?...** The divine house is *Shekhinah*, who contains all heavenly riches. Moses, "husband of *Shekhinah*," was trusted throughout Her realm. *Shekhinah* is also known as "the name of the blessed Holy One," conveying the divine essence.

The full verse in Numbers reads: *Not so My servant Moses, in all My house he is trusted*. See *Zohar* 1:76a, 218a; 2:5a (*MhN*), 21b (*MhN*).

518. ***within My walls...*** The *walls* are celestial regions around *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as heavenly Jerusalem. Upon these walls are stationed guardian angels. See *Zohar* 1:80b–81a (*ST*); 2:212a.

519. **יד (*Yad*), *A monument*...portion...** Through their holy union on Sabbath, the Companions draw down a portion of holy souls from *Shekhinah*, who are born into the world as virtuous sons and daughters.

Rabbi Shim'on interprets יד (*yad*), "hand" or "monument," according to another of its meanings: "portion" (as in Genesis 43:34). He now reads the verse: *I will give them, in My house and within My walls*, יד ושם טוב (*yad va-shem tov*), *a portion* באשלמותא טב (*be-ashlamuta tav*), of fine perfection, מבנים ומבנות (*mi-banim u-mi-banot*), [full] *of sons and daughters*. See *Zohar* 2:174a. For the simple sense of the verse, see above at note 516.

520. ***I will give him*—to that perfect portion** God will grant *an everlasting name* to the holy portion of souls: the descendants of the Companions. Thus the singular object—*(I will give) him*—refers appropriately to this portion.

521. **Alternatively, *I will give him*...** The singular object *him* can also refer to one who knows the mystery of divine Sabbath union and contemplates this while uniting with his wife on Sabbath eve. The descendants of such a person will be granted *an everlasting name*. Meanwhile,

others who abstain from sexual union during the weekdays and unite only on Sabbath, yet without fully understanding the divine mystery and the proper intention, will still draw down holy souls. To this group pertains the plural object: (*I will give*) *them* (*a portion* of perfection).

522. ***You shall not kindle fire…*** One who kindles fire on Sabbath arouses the fiery power of Judgment. However, this applies only to fire kindled *in all your dwellings*, not to the fire burning constantly on the altar of the Temple, which "ascends to the Most High" and overwhelms the fire of Judgment. Thus on Sabbath, the realm of pure Compassion (the Holy Ancient One) appears and prevails.

See *Zohar* 2:203b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 358. On the contrast between kindling *fire in all your dwellings* and kindling fire in the Temple, see *Mekhilta, Shabbeta (Vayaqhel)* 1; BT *Shabbat* 20a.

On the expression "fire consuming fire," see BT *Yoma* 21b (describing the fire of *Shekhinah*, which consumes the fiery angels); *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 16; *Tosafot, Ḥagigah* 23a, s.v. *she-ein bo; Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 50b, 69a; 2:226b; 3:25b, 27b, 138a (*IR*), 154b, 294a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 63–65.

523. ***six days YHVH made…*** **not** ***in six days…*** The simple sense of the verse is that God made the world in six days. However, the Hebrew wording does not include the preposition ב (*be*), "in," and here that lack is exploited to suggest that *YHVH made six days*, that is, He emanated six cosmic days (the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*), thereby generating *Tif'eret* (*heaven*) and *Shekhinah* (*earth*).

On the sefirotic symbolism of the Holy Name (*YHVH*), see above, p. 29, n. 117. On the verse in Exodus, see Exodus 31:17; Ibn Ezra on Genesis 14:4; *Bahir* 39 (57), 55 (82); Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:11; *Zohar* 1:30a, 247a; 2:31a; 3:94b, 103b, 298b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 134; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 81b.

524. ***A river*—gushing of the spring…** The river of emanation is *Ḥokhmah*, known as Father, who waters the garden—apparently *Binah* or the entire sefirotic realm from *Binah* through *Shekhinah*.

According to *MmD*, the question "Why?" means "Why is Father called *river*?"

525. ***Eden* itself is called Father…** According to Rabbi Abba (whose name means "father"), *Eden* refers to *Ḥokhmah*, the Father, who issues from the primordial *sefirah* of *Keter*, known as אין (*Ayin*), "Nothingness." The *river*, then, symbolizes *Binah* (the Divine Mother), who pours into the *garden* of *Shekhinah*.

Ḥokhmah is also called אתה (*Attah*), "You," which is linked with *father* in the verse from Isaiah. See *Zohar* 3:290a (*IZ*). Rabbi Abba may be alluding here to the homonym אתה (*atah*), "to come," since everything comes and flows from *Ḥokhmah*.

Keter's paradoxical name *Ayin* (Nothingness) alludes to its undifferentiated and incomprehensible nature: no-thingness. See above, note 328.

526. ***Honor your father*—the blessed Holy One…** According to Rabbi El'azar, *father* refers to *Tif'eret*, known also as the blessed Holy One; *mother* refers to *Shekhinah*, known also as Assembly of Israel. This divine couple engenders souls.

The interpretation of *father* and *mother* as divine parents probably derives from BT *Berakhot* 35b: "Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa said, 'Whoever enjoys this world without reciting a blessing—it is as if he robs the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel, as is said: *He who robs his father and mother and says, "It is no crime," is partner to a destroyer* (Proverbs 28:24)—*father* is none other than the blessed Holy One… and *mother* is none other than Assembly of Israel.'"

In this Talmudic passage, Assembly of Israel apparently refers to a supernal hypostasis (the mother of Israel), as it

does regularly in Kabbalah, designating *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 3:44b; Idel, *Kabbalah and Eros*, 27; above, notes 363, 394. On Assembly of Israel as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 5, n. 18.

527. **את אביך (*Et avikha*), *your father*...** Grammatically, the word את (*et*) is almost always an accusative particle with no clear independent sense. However, already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. Here, as often in the *Zohar*, את (*et*) alludes to *Shekhinah*, who comprises the totality of divine speech, the entire alphabet from א (*alef*) to ת (*tav*). Thus, although the phrase *your mother* alludes to *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel), the preceding phrase—את אביך (*et avikha*), *your father*—already includes Her.

On *et*, see BT *Pesaḥim* 22b, *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Zohar* 1:247a; 2:81b.

528. ***Honor your father*—unspecified...** Rabbi Abba had interpreted *father* as referring to *Ḥokhmah*. Rabbi El'azar had interpreted *your father* as referring to *Tif'eret*, and *your mother* as referring to *Shekhinah*. Rabbi Yehudah indicates that the wording in the Ten Commandments does not specify which *father* and *mother* are intended, which suggests that both sets of divine parents should be honored. The particle את (*et*) amplifies the meaning to include the entire sefirotic realm and the worlds below.

529. **As for what Rabbi Abba said...** Rabbi Yose confirms Rabbi Abba's description of *Ḥokhmah* as "the place from which all begins to flow" and his identification of this *sefirah* as You. He quotes a tradition that the hidden, beginningless realm of *Keter* is called He, since it cannot be addressed directly; whereas the more identifiable and addressable realm of *Ḥokhmah*, associated with beginning, is called You and Father. Yet, all the divine aspects are one.

On He and You as signifying respectively *Keter* and *Ḥokhmah*, see *Zohar* 3:290a (*IZ*).

530. **Surely, all is one…** Rabbi Ḥizkiyah agrees with Rabbi Yehudah that *Honor your father and your mother* applies to both sets of divine parents. Initially, it appears that *your father* refers to *Tif'eret* (known as the blessed Holy One) and *your mother* refers to *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel). Yet, Rabbi Shim'on interprets the verse in Deuteronomy (*You are children of YHVH your God*) as implying that *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* themselves are *children* of the higher parents, *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, who are referred to as יהוה אלהיכם (*YHVH Eloheikhem*), *YHVH your God*. Thus, the nonspecific wording *your father and your mother* includes *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah, Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, as well as one's human parents.

See above, note 528. For various interpretations, see *OY*; Galante; *Sullam*; *MmD*.

531. **Including one's teacher…** In the command to honor one's parents, the particle את (*et*) amplifies the meaning to include honoring one's teacher. Parents bring a child into this world; a teacher renders him worthy of the world that is coming.

Cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 22b, where R. Akiva offers an interpretation of Deuteronomy 10:20: את (*Et*) *YHVH your God you shall revere*, explaining that here the word *et* appears in order "to include scholars." See *Zohar* 1:112a–b, 132b. On *et*, see above, note 527.

532. **He is included with the blessed Holy One** According to Rabbi Yehudah, the obligation to honor one's teacher derives not from the command to honor one's parents but from the command to honor God.

See above at notes 526, 530, where *Honor your father* is interpreted as referring to God. See also the quotation from BT *Pesaḥim* in the preceding note.

533. **In these five…** The first five of the Ten Commandments include the second five.

On the relation between both sets of five commandments, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8; *Pesiqta Rabbati*

21; above at notes 375, 385.

534. ***I am YHVH… You shall not murder…*** The human being was created in the image of God, and a murderer mars the divine archetype.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21. Cf. *Tosefta Yevamot* 8:7; *Bereshit Rabbah* 34:14; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 337.

535. **he has not diminished this likeness…** The murderer diminishes not only the likeness of his human victim but the divine archetype on which every human being is modeled. Thus, the commandment *You shall not murder* depends upon *I am YHVH your God*.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *He who sheds the blood of a human*, באדם (*ba-adam*), *by a human, his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made the human*. Rabbi Ḥiyya reads the first part of the verse as: *He who sheds the blood of a human*—[his violent act reaches] *ba-adam, to the human*.

536. ***You shall have no* [*other gods*]*… You shall not commit adultery…*** The adulterer betrays the covenant of circumcision, engraved in one's flesh and pictured as the divine name. Such betrayal is tantamount to denying God and worshiping false gods; thus, *You shall not commit adultery* depends upon *You shall have no other gods beside Me*.

See *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21. Cf. *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8; *Tanḥuma, Naso* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:12. On circumcision and the divine name, see above, note 460.

The verse *You shall not bow down to them* implies here that lying down with a foreign (or forbidden) woman is similar and tantamount to idol worship. See above, note 461; *OY*; Galante; *MmD*. On the verse in Hosea, see *Zohar* 1:93a, 204a; 2:87b.

537. ***You shall not take* [*the name*]*… You shall not steal…*** A thief will eventually take God's name in vain by

swearing falsely in court.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21. Cf. *Sifra, Qedoshim* 2:5, 88c; BT *Bava Metsi'a* 5b–6a.

538. ***Remember the Sabbath day… You shall not bear false witness…*** The Sabbath testifies to the fact that God created the world in six days. One who observes the Sabbath affirms this testimony; one who violates the Sabbath denies it, thereby bearing false witness. Thus, "one depends on the other," namely, *You shall not bear false witness* is linked with *Remember the Sabbath day*.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21. On Sabbath as testifying to Creation, see Exodus 31:17 (recited in the *Qiddush* on Sabbath morning): *Between Me and the Children of Israel it is a sign forever that in six days YHVH made heaven and earth and on the seventh day He ceased and was refreshed*.

According to Rabbi Yose, the *truth* mentioned by Micah refers to the Sabbath, which testifies to the truth of God's creative act.

On the equivalence of observing Sabbath and fulfilling the entire Torah, see above, note 501. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 2:25; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1174, n. 17.

539. ***Honor your father… You shall not covet…*** If a man covets another man's wife and they engender a child, that child will honor his mother's husband and not his biological father.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8. Cf. *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21; *Tanḥuma, Naso* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:12.

540. ***Honor your father…you shall not covet… his field…*** Exodus 20:12 reads in full: *Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be prolonged on the land that YHVH your God is giving you*. The point here is that you should be content with *the land that YHVH…is giving you* and *not covet your neighbor's…field*. Thus, *You shall not*

covet your neighbor's wife (or *his field*) depends upon *Honor your father*…

The quotation *You shall not covet your neighbor's house or his field* actually conflates Exodus 20:14 and its parallel in Deuteronomy 5:18.

541. **These first five include the five others…** The first five of the Ten Commandments, engraved on the right stone tablet, include the second set of five, engraved on the left stone tablet. Thus, "all became *right*," as implied by the verse in Deuteronomy (where *fiery law* symbolizes the commandments on the left).

The five inclusive commandments on the right correspond to five voices through which the Torah was transmitted to Israel. This latter tradition is based on the multiple references to *voice* and *voices* in Exodus 19:16, 19. See BT *Berakhot* 6b; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 488; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 7; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 162 (and Wolfson's note); above at notes 299, 361, 385.

On the interplay between right and left in the context of Torah, see *Zohar* 1:198a, 243a; 2:81a, 84a–b, 135a, 166b, 206b, 223a; 3:176a.

542. **All were five within five…** Apparently referring to the five voices, which included five others.

For various interpretations, see *OY*; *Sullam*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1175; *MmD*.

543. **In these ten utterances were engraved all the commandments of Torah…** According to a rabbinic tradition, the Ten Commandments include all 613 commandments of the Torah. The total number of letters in the Ten Commandments (620) corresponds to the 613 commandments plus the 7 commandments of the sons of Noah (basic laws of morality) or the 7 days of Creation.

See *Tanḥuma, Qoraḥ* 12; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:15–16; 18:21; Saadiah Gaon, *Siddur*, 191–216; idem, Commentary on *Sefer Yetsirah*, 47–48; Rashi on Exodus 24:12

(mentioning Saadiah Gaon's *azharot*) and Song of Songs 5:16; Judah ben Barzillai, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 278; *Bahir* 87 (124); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 521; *Zohar* 2:82a, 93b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 340 (and Wolfson's note); Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, 4(12): 203–13.

"Pure and impure" may allude to forty-nine aspects of "pure" and forty-nine aspects of "impure" in Torah—namely, forty-nine ways by which something can be proven pure (and thus permitted) and forty-nine ways by which the same thing can be proven impure (and thus forbidden). See *Midrash Tehillim* 12:4, in the name of Rabbi Yannai: "With every utterance that the blessed Holy One spoke to Moses, He offered forty-nine aspects of 'pure' and forty-nine aspects of 'impure.'" See above, note 343.

"Roots" and "branches" apparently refer respectively to the 613 commandments and their rabbinic ramifications, which also derive from the revelation at Sinai. On "trees and plants…," see *OY*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1175; *MmD*.

544. **Torah is the name of the blessed Holy One…** The entire Torah constitutes a name of God.

On this tradition, see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 548; Naḥmanides, introduction to Commentary on the Torah, 6–7; *Zohar* 2:60a, 87a, 124a; 3:13b, 19a, 21a, 35b–36a, 73a, 89b, 98b, 159a, 265b, 298b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 341–42; *OY*; Galante; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 37–44; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1085–86; Idel, "Tefisat ha-Torah."

Here "ten utterances" can refer either to the Ten Commandments or the ten *sefirot*. The statement that God's name "is engraved in ten utterances" means that the individual letters of the name יהוה (*YHVH*) symbolize all of the *sefirot*, which thus constitute God's name. The י (*yod*) symbolizes the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, while its upper stroke symbolizes *Keter*. The first ה (*he*), often a feminine

marker, symbolizes the Divine Mother, *Binah*. The ו (*vav*), whose numerical value is six, symbolizes *Tif'eret* and the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). The second ה (*he*) symbolizes *Shekhinah*. See Asher ben David, *Peirush Shem ha-Meforash*, 112; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 44a–45b.

See M *Avot* 5:1: "The world was created through ten utterances." See above, p. 152, n. 52. In Kabbalah, these ten utterances of Creation symbolize the ten *sefirot*.

See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 219–20 (and Wolfson's n. 20), 340–41; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 4–5 (6–7), 19 (23); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 371. Cf. *Zohar* 2:93b; 3:11b–12a. On the relation between "the ten utterances of Creation" and the Ten Commandments, see above, note 141.

545. **He attains the blessed Holy One Himself...** By delving deeply into Torah, one attains God's essence (*Ein Sof*), which is inseparable from His name (the *sefirot*).

546. ***You shall not make with Me...*** The simple sense of *with Me* is "beside Me," but a midrashic interpretation alters the vocalization of the word אתי (*itti*), *with Me*, to אותי (*oti*), *Me*, thereby transforming the meaning of the verse: *You shall not make* אותי (*oti*), *Me*, [into] *a god of silver and a god of gold*, that is, in addition to the prohibition against worshiping other gods, the Israelites are commanded not to make a human-like image of God Himself out of silver or gold and worship it.

Here Rabbi Yose adopts this midrashic revocalization, though he apparently implies (along kabbalistic lines) that silver and gold symbolize respectively *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, both of which are included in—and balanced by—*Tif'eret*. According to a kabbalistic reading of the verse in Haggai, *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*) is the antecedent of *Mine*, as implied by the verse's conclusion: *Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold, declares YHVH of Hosts*.

For Rabbi Yose, the verse in Exodus may now mean: Even though these two precious metals symbolize divine

qualities, “you shall not divinize them,” or (following the midrashic interpretation) “*you shall not make* אותי (*oti*), *Me*, into a human-like image fashioned out of silver or gold.” Or, perhaps: “You shall not divide the unified divinity who is centered in *Tif’eret* into a duality of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*.”

For the midrashic reading of the verse in Exodus, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 10; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 24b; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 20:20, n. 495. On the verse in Haggai, see *Bahir* 34–35 (52); *Zohar* 1:217a; 2:138b, 197b. For various interpretations of Rabbi Yose’s statement, see *OY*; Vital; Galante; *MM*; *NO*; *MmD*.

547. ***You are great and Your name is great in power…*** גדול (*Gadol*), *Great*, refers to *Ḥesed*, also known as *Gedullah* (Greatness) and symbolized by silver. *Ḥesed*’s polar opposite is גבורה (*Gevurah*), *Power*, symbolized by gold. These two divine aspects, or colors, appear fully in *Tif’eret*, whose full name is *Tif’eret Yisra’el* (Beauty of Israel).

Apparently, Rabbi Yitsḥak understands the verse in Isaiah as being spoken by *Binah*. See Galante; *MmD*. The verse reads: *You are My servant, Israel, in whom* אתפאר (*etpa’ar*), *I glory*. This final word alludes to its cognate noun, תפארת (*Tif’eret*).

548. ***I will rejoice greatly in YHVH…in my God…*** Rabbi Yehudah asks why the verse includes two different divine names: *YHVH* and *Elohai, my God* (that is, *Elohim*). He explains that *YHVH* implies Compassion, while *Elohim* implies Judgment. Israel declares that they will greet God joyously, whether He comes to them in either quality.

Compassion reflects the *sefirah* of *Ḥesed*, while Judgment is equivalent to *Gevurah*, also known as *Din* (Judgment). These polar opposites are balanced and included in *Tif’eret* —“engraved in Him.” See Galante.

Rabbi Yehudah associates the word ישע (*yesha*), *salvation*, with the verb שעה (*sh’h*), “to gaze, look at.” The sefirotic colors of *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* decorate *Tif’eret*, upon whom one is invited to gaze. *Tif’eret* is also known as צדקה (*tsedaqah*),

righteousness. Israel declares that God has clothed and wrapped them in sefirotic colors.

On *YHVH* and *Elohim* as signifying, respectively, Compassion and Judgment, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:7; *Midrash Tehillim* 56:3; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:6; 6:1–3.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *I will rejoice greatly in YHVH, my soul will exult in my God. For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, wrapped me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom dons a turban, as a bride adorns herself with jewels*. The verse in Samuel reads: *They gazed, but there was no savior; to YHVH, but He answered them not*. See Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*.

549. ***As a bridegroom…As a bride…*** One wearing white, symbolizing *Ḥesed*; the other, gold jewelry, symbolizing *Gevurah*. The two colors combine in *Tif'eret*, upon whom all yearn to gaze.

Rabbi Yehudah may be associating the verb יכהן (*yekhahen*), which is rendered here *dons*, with the noun כהן (*kohen*), "priest," who symbolizes *Ḥesed*. See Vital.

550. **שוש אשיש (*Sos asis*), *I will rejoice greatly…*** This double verbal form implies two joys, befitting Compassion, whereas the simple form תגל (*tagel*), *will rejoice*, implies one joy, corresponding with Judgment.

551. **In all, joy upon joy…** Rabbi Yehudah insists that Israel will respond with multiple joy whether God appears in Compassion or Judgment. In the time of final redemption, God will delight His people with a fourfold joy, corresponding to the four times they have been exiled.

"The four times Israel has been scattered" probably refers to the four kingdoms that subjugated or exiled Israel: Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome. See Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:223, n. 82.

The full verse in Isaiah 35 reads: *The redeemed of YHVH will return, and come to Zion with jubilation, with eternal*

joy upon their heads. They will attain joy and gladness; sorrow and sighing will flee. The verse in Isaiah 12 concludes: *Make His deeds known among the nations; declare that His name is exalted*.

552. ***God spoke all these words…*** This verse introduces the Ten Commandments. According to the *Zohar, all these words* of the Ten Commandments not only include all the commandments of Torah, but allude to the entire sefirotic realm and all worlds below. See above, note 543; below at note 608; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 340.

553. **אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I*—mystery of the upper world…** The opening word of the Ten Commandments—אנכי (*anokhi*), *I*—alludes to the upper sefirotic realm world, symbolized by the first letters of the name that immediately follows: יהוה (*YHVH*). The first three letters of *YHVH* themselves constitute a holy name: יהו (*YHV*). The י (*yod*) symbolizes the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, while its upper stroke symbolizes *Keter*. The ה (*he*), often a feminine marker, symbolizes the Divine Mother, *Binah*. The ו (*vav*), whose numerical value is six, symbolizes *Tif'eret* and the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*), all of which gestate within *Binah*.

See above, note 544. On the name יהו (*YHV*), see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:13; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 31–33. The verse in Exodus reads: *I am YHVH your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of a house of slaves*.

554. ***Anokhi, I*—revealed and hidden…** This word alludes both to *Shekhinah* (who is relatively revealed) and *Binah* (who is concealed). The *gimatriyya* (numerical value) of אנכי (*anokhi*), *I*, is equivalent to that of כסא (*kisse*), "throne." *Shekhinah* is pictured as the throne of King *Tif'eret*. She is also symbolized by the moon, who has no light of Her own and is dependent upon the illumination of the sun (*Tif'eret*). When the two of them unite, the moon waxes full.

On *anokhi* as alluding to *Shekhinah*, see above, notes 398, 410. On *anokhi* as also alluding to *Binah*, see *TZ* 21, 50a, 56a;

30, 74b. See below, notes 559–560.

On the *gimatriyya* of אנכי (*anokhi*) and כסא (*kisse*), see *TZ* 21, 56a; 22, 64a. On the moon possessing no light of her own, see Radak on Genesis 1:16; *Zohar* 1:20a, 31a, 124b–125a, 132b, 179b, 181a, 233b, 238a, 249b; 2:43a (*Piq*), 142a, 145b, 215a, 218b; 3:113b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 338; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 188, 257; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 68–69 (85–86); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 381. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 156a.

555. ***Anokhi, I*—consummating...** As She prepares to unite with *Tif'eret, Shekhinah* (the Throne) is accompanied by the celestial *ḥayyot* (living beings) and arrayed like a bride.

556. ***Anokhi, I*—mystery of all as one...** This word also alludes to *Binah* (see above, note 554), who contains all the letters of the alphabet and the thirty-two paths of Wisdom, which radiate from *Binah*'s partner, *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom), and convey the Torah.

According to *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1–2, God created the world by means of "thirty-two wondrous paths of Wisdom," namely, the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet and the ten *sefirot*. See above, pp. 27–28, n. 110.

557. ***Anokhi, I*—mystery of giving a fine reward...** See *Sifra, Aḥarei Mot* 13:2, 85d: "אני יהוה (*Ani YHVH*), *I am YHVH* (Leviticus 18:6): *I* will faithfully render a reward."

See *Sifra, Aḥarei Mot* 9:1, 85c; 13:5, 86a; *Qedoshim* 8:11, 91b; *Behar* 9:6, 110d; *Sifrei*, Numbers 115; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 6:4 (on 5:16); *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A 16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayetse* 22; Rashi on Exodus 6:2; Leviticus 19:16; *Midrash Aggadah*, Leviticus 18:2; *Zohar* 1:65b.

The mnemonic אני פרעה (*Ani Par'oh*), *I am Pharaoh*, alludes to the root פרע (*pr'*), "to recompense." See below at note 563.

558. ***Anokhi, I*, and *You shall have no* [*other gods*]...** The first two of the Ten Commandments include

respectively all of the positive and negative commandments of the Torah.

The first version of the Ten Commandments reads: זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day to keep it holy* (Exodus 20:8). The second version reads: שמור (*Shamor*), *Observe, the Sabbath day to keep it holy* (Deuteronomy 5:12). According to rabbinic tradition, these two versions were spoken by God simultaneously. According to Kabbalah, *zakhor, remember*, suggests זכר (*zakhar*), "male," signifying the male divine potency, whereas the alternative formulation, *shamor, observe*, signifies the female, *Shekhinah*. Further, *zakhor* implies the 248 positive commandments of Torah (since time-bound positive commandments are generally incumbent only on men), while *shamor* implies the 365 negative commandments (incumbent on women as well), together totaling 613 commandments.

On *remember* and *observe* being spoken simultaneously, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 7; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 20:8; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 5:12; JT *Nedarim* 3:2, 37d; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 27a.

See BT *Berakhot* 20b; *Bahir* 124 (182); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 496–97; Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:8; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Sefer ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon*, 420; *Zohar* 1:5b, 47b, 48b, 164b, 199b, 248a; 2:70b, 92a–b (*Piq*), 138a; 3:81b, 92b (*Piq*), 115b, 224a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 118; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110; Wolfson, introduction to *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 63–71.

On the unique quality of the first two commandments, see above, note 281. On these two commandments as including all of the positive and negative commandments, see *TZ* 22, 63b–64a. Cf. *Bahir* 32 (49).

559. ***Anokhi, I*—sealed, hidden mystery...** Apparently alluding to the totality of the *sefirot* contained within *Binah*, gestating from the primordial seed of *Ḥokhmah* sown within Her. Alternatively (or also), alluding to the totality of *sefirot* included in *Shekhinah*.

On *anokhi* as alluding to *Shekhinah* or *Binah*, see above, notes 554, 556, and the next note.

560. **אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I*—mystery of two thrones...** *Shekhinah* (the throne of *Tif'eret*) and *Binah* (the throne of *Ḥokhmah*). The word אנכי (*anokhi*), *I*, can be understood as composed of two elements: אני (*ani*), "I" (designating *Shekhinah*, the Divine Presence), and the letter כ (*kaf*), standing for כסא (*kisse*), "throne" (designating *Binah*, the upper throne).

On *Shekhinah* as אני (*ani*), "I," see *Zohar* 1:6a–b, 65b, 204b, 228a; 2:236b; 3:178b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 380 (and Wolfson's notes 8–9). Cf. M *Sukkah* 4:5; BT *Sukkah* 45a, and Rashi and Tosafot, ad loc., s.v. *ani va-ho*; *Zohar* 1:23a (*TZ*); 3:222b (*RM*), 227a (*RM*), 276b (*RM*).

561. **the Sanctuary was purified...** *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the Sanctuary) was purified and no demonic powers could threaten Her.

On the elimination of the evil impulse at Sinai, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:15 (on 1:2); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 41; *Zohar* 1:52a–b; 2:183b; 3:97b (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 139 (and Wolfson's note). Cf. BT *Yevamot* 103b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זוהמא (*zohama*), filth [or: slime, lust]. Israel, who stood at Mount Sinai—their filth ceased. Star-worshipers, who did not stand at Mount Sinai—their filth did not cease." See below, note 609.

The concluding phrase, "complete mystery in the Holy Name," may allude to the sefirotic symbolism of the letters of יהוה (*YHVH*). See above, note 544.

562. **א (*Alef*)—mystery of unifying the Holy Name...** Now begins a list of twelve positive commandments associated with the individual letters of אנכי (*anokhi*), *I*. The first is the unification of the name יהוה (*YHVH*) through the recitation of the *Shema*, whereby all the *sefirot* are joined. This unification is symbolized by the א (*alef*), whose numerical value is one.

In the name יהוה (*YHVH*), the letter ו (*vav*), whose numerical value is six, symbolizes the sefirotic core, consisting of *Tif'eret* and the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). The interchange of א (*alef*) with *vav* may allude to the full spelling of the latter letter's name: ואו (*vav*), which consists of an *alef* between two *vavs*.

See the end of the preceding note. On the kabbalistic significance of the *Shema*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:971–74.

563. **נ (*Nun*)—mystery of revering the blessed Holy One...** The second letter of אנכי (*anokhi*) symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is associated with reverence or awe and administers divine Judgment. She is also symbolized by the second (or "lower") ה (*he*) in the name יהוה (*YHVH*).

On נ (*nun*) as a symbol of *Shekhinah*, who is known as נוקבא (*nuqba*), "Female," see *Zohar* 1:147a (*Tos*); 2:139a, 215a; 3:66b, 155a; *ZḤ* 41c. On *Shekhinah* as reverence or awe, see *Zohar* 1:5b, 7b, 11b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 24–32. On the letter ה (*he*), see above, note 544.

For the formulation "there is Judgment and a Judge," see JT *Sanhedrin* 10:2, 28a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 26:6; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:3; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:11; *Zohar* 1:72a, 87b. On reward and retribution, see above, note 557.

564. **כ (*Kaf*)—to sanctify the Holy Name every day...** The third letter of אנכי (*anokhi*) symbolizes *Binah*, the upper כסא (*kisse*), "throne" (see above, note 560). She is also symbolized by the first (or "upper") ה (*he*) in the name יהוה (*YHVH*). See above, note 544.

Here *Binah* is linked with two commandments: sanctifying God's name daily by reciting the *Qedushah* (prayer of "sanctification") and praying "at all times," that is, at all the prescribed times, or whenever one is in need. By fulfilling these commandments, one raises the throne of *Binah* above the four sefirotic *ḥayyot* (living beings), namely *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Shekhinah*.

On the daily sanctification, see *Zohar* 3:93a (*Piq*), and *NZ*, ad loc., n. 2.

565. **י (*Yod*)—to engage in Torah day and night…** The fourth letter of אנכי (*anokhi*) is the first letter of יהוה (*YHVH*), symbolizing the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, also known as Primordial Torah. The mark of circumcision is identified with י (*yod*). See above, note 460. *Ḥokhmah*, the first *sefirah* to emerge from beginningless *Keter*, is associated with the firstborn, who according to Exodus 13:2, must be sanctified to God.

On tefillin, tzitzit, and mezuzah, see the Glossary. The knot of the phylactery of the hand resembles the letter *yod*. On the connection between *yod* and the commandments of tzitzit and mezuzah, see Galante; *MmD*. Surrendering one's soul to God refers to the intense devotion during prayer, apparently during the act of prostration following the daily *Amidah*. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:970–71. For the command to cleave to God, see Deuteronomy 10:20; 11:22; 13:5; 30:20.

566. **12 supernal commandments, encompassing 236…** These 12 essential positive commandments encompass 236 others, totaling 248 positive commandments, all of which are indicated by the major commandment *Remember the Sabbath day* and included in the first of the Ten Commandments: אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I, am YHVH your God*. See above, note 558.

Unlike the first three letters of אנכי (*anokhi*), which are transformed into the last three letters of יהוה (*YHVH*), the last letter of *anokhi*—י (*yod*)—remains what it is, since this letter symbolizes the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, which includes the entire Torah. Fittingly, *yod* begins the name of *YHVH*.

On the transformation of the first three letters of *anokhi*, see above at notes 562–64. On *Ḥokhmah* as including all of Torah, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:5, in the name of Rabbi Avin: "Torah is an unripe fruit of supernal Wisdom." See above, note 396.

The twelve essential positive commandments plus the first of the Ten Commandments (*Anokhi*) correspond to the thirteen attributes of Compassion, which are listed in Exodus 34:6–7: *YHVH, YHVH! A compassionate and gracious God*… See also Micah 7:18–20. The phrase "one presiding, making thirteen" may refer to the opening word in the passage in Exodus: *YHVH*, which is itself considered an attribute.

567. **לא יהיה לך (*Lo yihyeh lekha*), *You shall have no* [*other gods*]…** As explained above (note 558), the second of the Ten Commandments includes all of the 365 negative commandments of the Torah, which are also indicated by the major commandment *Observe the Sabbath day*.

568. **ל (*Lamed*)—mystery of not honoring… another god** The opening letter of the word לא (*lo*), [*You shall have*] *no* [*other gods*], stands taller than all other letters of the alphabet, indicating that God alone should be exalted and honored.

569. **tower flying, ascending in the air…** The towering ל (*lamed*) represents a warning not to repeat the sin of those who built the Tower of Babel, which is interpreted here as an idolatrous monument.

The image of a tower flying in the air originates in the Talmud (BT *Ḥagigah* 15b, *Sanhedrin* 106b), where the phrase *counter of the towers* (Isaiah 33:18) is interpreted as: "one who counted three hundred fixed laws concerning a tower flying in the air." The laws are apparently laws of defilement (see M *Oholot* 4:1). Rashi (on both Talmudic passages) offers several interpretations, including one from his teacher that the tower refers to the letter ל (*lamed*), tallest letter of the alphabet.

See *Zohar* 1:6a (Vol. 1, p. 36, n. 251); 2:102a; *ZḤ* 58a, 66a–b (*ShS*), 70a (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 89–90 (112–14). On the Tower of Babel, see *Zohar* 1:74b (*ST*).

570. **ל (*Lamed*)...not to bow...** The upright image of the ל (*lamed*) indicates that one should not bow down to any false god.

On not turning to or looking at idols, see Leviticus 19:4; BT *Shabbat* 149a; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Avodat Kokhavim* 2:2; *Zohar* 3:84a.

571. **א (*Alef*)—not to substitute the unity...** *Alef*—the concluding letter of the word לֹא (*lo*)—has a numerical value of one, indicating God's oneness and unity, which must not be compromised or betrayed.

572. **א (*Alef*)—not to stray after a ghost or familiar spirit...** Not to engage in necromancy, as forbidden in Leviticus 19:31. "Through the mystery of a human image..." refers to necromantic techniques such as consulting a human skull. (See BT *Sanhedrin* 65b.) Here, the א (*alef*) indicates אדם (*adam*), "human."

573. **א (*Alef*)—not to swear orally by the name of another god** Here א (*alef*) apparently alludes to אלהים אחרים (*elohim aḥerim*), "other gods."

574. **12 others...353 other commandments...** These 12 negative commandments encompass 353 others, totaling 365 negative commandments, all of which are indicated by the major commandment *Observe the Sabbath day* and included in the second of the Ten Commandments: *You shall have no other gods beside Me*. This latter commandment together with אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I, am YHVH your God*, includes all 613 commandments of the Torah. See above, notes 558, 567.

575. **אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I*—totality of above and below...** The opening word of the Ten Commandments alludes to entire divine realm and all worlds and creatures below. Rabbi Shim'on may be implying that Divine Being—signified by אנכי (*Anokhi*), *I*—includes all existence.

"Holy living beings" apparently refers here to the quarter of *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. See above, note 564. On *Anokhi*, see above at notes 553–66; *OY*.

576. **twelve lower living beings** Twelve angels serving *Shekhinah*, who should be not be worshiped as *other gods*.

On *Shekhinah*'s twelve angels, see above, p. 88, n. 64.

577. ***You shall not make for yourself* פסל (*phesel*), *a carved image…*** Rabbi Shim'on associates פסל (*pesel*, or *phesel*) with the nouns פסלו (*pislu*), "disqualification," and פסולת (*pesolet*), "refuse, waste." The demonic powers constitute the dross of the process of emanation, serving as the basis of idolatry.

The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming from the north, a great cloud and flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it; and from within it, like the color of amber, from within the fire*. Here, *north* symbolizes the divine left side, source of the demonic realm. The first four elements mentioned by Ezekiel (*stormy wind, great cloud, flashing fire, radiance*) represent four demonic husks or shells surrounding the kernel of holiness—which is identified with חשמל (*ḥashmal*), *amber*. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:463–64, 509; above, notes 291–99.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any form of what is in the heavens above or what is on the earth below or what is in the waters beneath the earth*.

578. ***Or any form*—as is written: *and flashing fire*** Rabbi Shim'on links the second forbidden idolatrous object with the second demonic shell seen by Ezekiel. See the preceding note.

579. ***For I, YHVH your God*—to arouse the heart upward…** Not to descend to the demonic realms of idolatry.

The context in Exodus (20:5–6) reads: *You shall not bow down to them and you shall not worship them, for I, YHVH your God, am a jealous God, inflicting the guilt of fathers upon sons, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing kindness to the*

thousandth generation of those who love Me, of those who keep My commands.

580. **jealousy lies in that place…** Divine jealousy is aroused by idolatry, which betrays and impairs *Shekhinah*. She is sometimes known as אל (*El*), *God*, and here the phrase "that place" alludes to Her.

The context in Proverbs (30:21–23) reads: *At three things the earth trembles, four it cannot bear: a slave becoming a king, a scoundrel sated with food, a loathsome woman getting married, and a slave-girl supplanting her mistress*. Here, Rabbi Shim'on interprets *three things* as referring to three phrases in the commandment against idolatry. *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *earth*) trembles in jealous rage at any idolatrous act.

On divine jealousy and idolatry, see Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:36; Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:3. On the verse in Proverbs, see above, p. 325, n. 447.

581. ***Inflicting the guilt of fathers upon sons…* a single tree…** Rabbi Shim'on justifies the punishment of a sinner's descendants by alluding to the process of reincarnation. The souls of the father, son, grandson, and great-grandson are in fact a single soul ("a single tree"), planted and replanted by God. If the original sinner's descendants do not live virtuously—mending their ancestor's ways—they are punished both for his and their failures. However, if they act virtuously—restoring the soul-tree—they are showered with divine kindness, as implied by the following verse in Exodus: *but showing kindness to the thousandth generation of those who love Me, of those who keep My commands*. For the biblical context, see above, note 579.

The image of the tree as a symbol of reincarnation derives from *Bahir* 135 (195). On reincarnation, see *Zohar* 1:131a, 186b, 239a; 2:75a, 94b–114a passim; 3:7a, 182b; *ZḤ* 59a–c; 89b (*MhN, Rut*); Scholem, *Major Trends*, 242–43; idem, *Kabbalah*, 344–50; idem, *On the Mystical Shape*

of the Godhead, 197–250. On the verse in Exodus, see Scholem, “Qabbalot R. Ya’aqov ve-R. Yitsḥaq,” 286–87.

582. **when the blessed Holy One planted the world…** At Creation, God sealed the watery depths with the Foundation Stone, engraved with the Divine Name, thereby ensuring that the waters would not rise and inundate the world.

Cf. the tradition reported in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan (BT *Sukkah* 53a–b): “When David dug the hollows [beneath the site of the Temple], the abyss arose and threatened to drown the world…. [David] inscribed the [divine] Name on a potsherd and cast it into the abyss, and it subsided….”

See JT *Sanhedrin* 10:2, 29a; *Midrash Shemu’el* 26; Gaster, ed., *Sefer ha-Ma’asiyyot*, 113–14; *Zohar* 3:198b; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:258, n. 70; Liebes, *Torat ha-Yetsirah*, 177–89.

On the Foundation Stone, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 28:30; *Targum*, Song of Songs 4:12; *Zohar* 2:152a; *ZḤ* 76b (*MhN, Rut*); above, p. 248, n. 183; Vol. 2, p. 8, n. 53; Vol. 3, p. 396, n. 470 (where the root שתל [*shtal*], “to plant,” is also discussed); Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:14–16, n. 39; Noy, “Even ha-Shetiyyah”; Heinemann, “David ha-Melekh,” 32, n. 21.

583. **its original state** Of watery chaos.

See JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 10:9; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:4; *Zohar* 1:17b, 56a–b.

584. **Ye’azriel…** Whose name consists of the root עזר (*’zr*), “help,” and אל (*El*), “God.” See Margaliot, *Mal’akhei Elyon*, 67–68.

585. **לא תשא (*Lo tissa*), *You shall not raise…*** The simple sense of the verse is לא תשא (*Lo tissa*), *You shall not take, the name of YHVH your God* לשוא (*la-shav*), *in vain*. Rabbi Shim’on reads the opening words hyperliterally: *Lo tissa, You shall not raise, the name of YHVH* [by swearing] *la-shav, falsely*—thereby

exposing the world to the threatening waters. See *ZḤ* 76b (*MhN, Rut*).

586. **זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day*... mystery of Holy Covenant...** זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember*, suggests זכר (*zakhar*), "male," alluding to *Yesod*, the divine phallus, symbolized by both the covenant of circumcision and the Sabbath day. *Yesod* includes the entire flow of emanation from all the higher sefirotic limbs, which He pours into *Shekhinah* (the Divine Feminine, symbolized by Sabbath eve). Just as *Yesod* includes the entire sefirotic flow, so Sabbath includes the entire Torah, and the observance of Sabbath is equivalent to the fulfillment of the whole Torah.

On *zakhor*, see above, note 558. On the various sefirotic aspects of Sabbath, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1223–26. On the equivalence of Sabbath and Torah, see above, note 501.

587. **זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember*, is mystery of male...** See the preceding note.

588. **את (*Et*), *the Sabbath day*...** The particle את (*et*) alludes to *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by Sabbath eve (Entrance of Sabbath) and, in general, night. Thus, the wording זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember*, את (*et*) *the Sabbath day* includes both *Yesod* (indicated by both *zakhor* and *the Sabbath day*) and *Shekhinah* (*et*), implying that the union of the divine couple is consummated on Sabbath. On *et*, see above, note 527.

589. ***To hallow it*—for it needs holiness...** By sanctifying the Sabbath, Israel adorns *Shekhinah*, preparing Her for union with Her male partner.

590. **זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember*—a place that has no forgetting...** *Yesod*—the Divine זכר (*zakhar*), "Male," and site of the Covenant—is known as זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember* (see above, note 586). This realm is free of forgetting. In fact, the entire range of *sefirot* from *Binah* through *Yesod* is known as World of the Male, where forgetting plays no part.

Below *Yesod* is *Shekhinah*, who is vulnerable to forgetting; so angelic officials are stationed near Her to record human actions. *Shekhinah* is known as the Holy Throne, and according to a rabbinic tradition, "There is no forgetting before Your Throne of Glory." Here, Rabbi Shim'on interprets this to mean that in the *sefirah* preceding ("before") *Shekhinah*, namely *Yesod* (known as *Zakhor*), there is no forgetting. All the more so, in the higher reaches of the World of the Male, engraved with the name יהו (*YHV*).

On remembering and forgetting, see *Zohar* 1:159b–160a, 193b. On the World of the Male, see above, note 147. For the statement "There is no forgetting…," see BT *Berakhot* 32b; *Midrash Tehillim* 137:8. On the name יהו (*YHV*), see above, note 553.

591. **Below needs to be sanctified…** *Shekhinah*, situated below *Yesod*, is sanctified by His holy, blessed flow, which is stimulated when Israel adorns Her with their Sabbath prayers and the meal of Sabbath eve. She is known as Entrance of Sabbath.

On the Sabbath meals, see above, pp. 498–502 and n. 479.

592. ***Zakhor, Remember*, does not need to be sanctified…** One might assume that *Yesod* Himself, the source of holiness, does not need to be sanctified. But in fact, *Yesod* (symbolized by the Sabbath day) needs to be sanctified by Israel's hallowing of that day, which draws emanation to Him from above, just as *Shekhinah*'s sanctification by *Yesod* is stimulated by Israel's welcoming of Sabbath eve.

593. ***Honor your father and your mother… Honor YHVH…*** According to midrashic interpretation, the parallel between these two verses indicates that just as one should honor God, so one should honor his parents. Further, the verse in Proverbs 3 describes how to express honoring.

The simple sense of מהונך (*me-hinnekha*), *with your substance*, is "with your wealth," but a midrashic reading

suggests מחנך (*meḥinnekha*), “with your grace”: you should honor God with whatever gifts He has bestowed upon you, e.g., by praising Him with a sweet voice. For one’s parents, the sweetest melody a child can offer is acting virtuously.

On the relation between the command to honor one’s parents and the verse in Proverbs, see *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 20:12; *Sifra, Qedoshim* 1:5, 86d; JT *Pe’ah* 1:1, 15c–d; *Qiddushin* 1:7, 61b; BT *Qiddushin* 30b, 32a; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 24; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23.

On הונך (*honekha*) and חנך (*ḥinnekha*), see JT *Pe’ah* 1:1, 15d; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 10:3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 25; *Tanḥuma, Re’eh* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Re’eh* 9; Rashi on Proverbs 3:9.

The phrase “melody of the whole world” recalls “the harmony of the spheres,” turning in desire of the divine. See Aristotle, *On the Heavens* 2:9, 290b–291a; *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*), 161b (*ST*), 233b (*Tos*); 2:196a, 211a; 3:165a, 209a; Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 132. Cf. the closing lines of Dante, *Divine Comedy, Paradiso*.

594. **they share in a single partnership over him…** See BT *Qiddushin* 30b: “There are three partners in a human being: the blessed Holy One, his father, and his mother.”

See BT *Niddah* 31a; *Zohar* 3:83a (*Piq*), 219b; *ZḤ* 16b (*MhN*), 49a.

595. ***So that your days may be prolonged…*** The length of a person’s life, or *days*, depends upon the seven cosmic *days*, namely, the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*. One who lives virtuously (for example, by honoring his parents) participates in and unifies these *sefirot*, thereby drawing down blessing and longevity. Moreover, a person’s fulfilled days ascend above, abiding in the presence of God.

The full verse reads: *Honor your father and your mother, so that* יאריכון ימיך (*ya’arikhun yamekha*), *your days may be prolonged, upon the land that YHVH your God is giving you*. Rabbi Shim’on apparently interprets this to mean:… so

that ya'arikhun yamekha, they [the sefirotic days] *may lengthen your days*. On the heavenly dimension of human days, see *Zohar* 1:221b–222a, 224a–b.

596. **על (*al*), *Upon, the land…*** A virtuous person will ultimately enjoy the bliss of *Tif'eret*, who is known as דנהרא אספקלריא (*ispaqlarya de-nahara*), "the speculum that shines." This realm lies על (*al*), *above, Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by *the land*.

The mirror of *Tif'eret* reflects the brilliance of all the sefirotic "days" from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, which issue from the *Binah* (or *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*), "the wellspring of all."

On the term *ispaqlarya*, see above, note 301.

597. **What is different about these two…** Concerning two specific commandments, the Torah promises longevity: honoring one's parents and sending off the mother bird from the nest. See Deuteronomy 22:6–7: *If a bird's nest happens to be before you on the way, in any tree or on the ground—fledglings or eggs—and the mother crouching over the fledglings or over the eggs, do not take the mother together with the children. Surely send off the mother, and the children you may take for yourself, so that it may go well with you and you will prolong your days*.

Rabbi Shim'on explains that both of these commandments link human *days* with sefirotic *days*. In the command to honor one's parents, "father" and "mother" allude to *Tif'eret* (or *Yesod*) and *Shekhinah*, symbolized by *remember* and *observe*. See above, note 558. By honoring one's parents, one stimulates the union of this divine couple and receives the gift of longevity.

On the connection between these two commandments, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 336; JT *Pe'ah* 1:1, 15d; BT *Qiddushin* 39b; *Midrash Shemu'el* 7:2; *Devarim Rabbah* 6:2; *Tanḥuma, Eqev* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Eqev* 3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23.

598. **concerning sending off from the nest…** For the context in Deuteronomy 22, see the preceding note. The

mother bird symbolizes the supernal world of *Binah* (the Divine Mother), who lies beyond comprehension and cannot be grasped. So, *send off the mother*—let Her go, put Her out of your mind, do not even try to capture this subtle dimension of divinity. Rather, focus on *the children*, the lower *sefirot* engendered by *Binah*.

The verse in Deuteronomy 4 reads in full: *For ask now of primal days that were before you, from the day God created a human on the earth and from one end of heaven to the other end of heaven, has anything as great as this ever happened or has its like been heard?* The reference is to God's redeeming Israel from Egypt and revealing Himself to them at Mount Sinai. In rabbinic literature this verse is interpreted as imposing a limit on cosmological speculation. See BT *Ḥagigah* 11b: "You may inquire concerning *from one end of heaven to the other*, but you may not inquire concerning what is above, what is below, what came before, what will come after."

In Kabbalah the *primal days* allude to the cosmic days of Creation, from *Ḥesed* to *Yesod*, whose core is *Tif'eret*, known as *heaven*. This entire realm, *from one end of heaven to the other*, is open to contemplative questioning; everything "above the *end of heaven*" (that is, *Binah* and what lies beyond Her) is incomprehensible.

On the kabbalistic interpretation of "sending off [the mother] from the nest," see *Bahir* 74 (104–105); Naḥmanides and Recanati on Deuteronomy 22:6; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod, Berakhot* 33b, *Ḥullin* 142a; *Zohar* 1:158a; 2:7b–8a; 3:254a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 338–39. Cf. *Zohar* 1:219a; 2:85b. On the incomprehensibility of *Binah*, see *Zohar* 1:1b (Vol. 1, p. 5, n. 27).

On the verse in Deuteronomy 4, see also *Tosefta Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77c; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 18:13; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:10; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 10; *Zohar* 1:1b (Vol. 1, p. 5, n. 28), 30a, 85b–86a, 141b, 158a; 2:22a, 232a;

Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 31 (36–37); idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 20, 375; idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 371.

599. ***so that* יטב (*yitav*), *it may go well…*** Rabbi Shim'on interprets this clause to mean *so that yitav, it may act well, with you*—that is, so that the hidden realm of *Binah* may bestow blessing upon you. He then interprets והארכת ימים (*ve-ha'arakhta yamim*), *and you will prolong your days*, as emphasizing the active role of the human being, who through virtuous action unifies the cosmic days, thereby ensuring his own longevity. This corresponds to the mystical meaning of *the children you may take for yourself*. See the preceding note and cf. note 595.

600. **If one encounters the opportunity to act…** If one takes the opportunity to fulfill a *mitsvah* and does so with כוונה (*kavvanah*), "intention, direction, concentration, awareness," then he is truly happy, for he thereby unifies the *sefirot* and contemplates divine glory. True, even one who performs a *mitsvah* without *kavvanah* has still fulfilled his obligation, but since he does not comprehend the deep reason and significance of this act, he occupies a lower rung. An act performed for its own sake with *kavvanah* and aspiration ascends on high.

On the rabbinic concept of *kavvanah*, and the question of whether *mitsvot* require *kavvanah* and whether they need to be done for their own sake (that is, without ulterior motives), see Urbach, *The Sages*, 1:393–99. On the kabbalistic understanding of *kavvanah*, see Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 176–80; idem, "The Concept of Kavvanah"; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:941–74.

601. **by action of the body…** If one performs a *mitsvah* with genuine intention, his act is both physical and spiritual, delighting God. Yet even without the essential element of *kavvanah*, one can still rely on divine assistance to complete the arrayal and unification of the *sefirot*. King David prayed for precisely this: *The work of our hands, establish for us*—even if we cannot do this ourselves. The conclusion of the

verse, *establish it*, refers to *Shekhinah*, who needs to be perfected through human action by being joined with the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, symbolized by the three patriarchs.

The formulation "the blessed Holy One desires a person's heart" appears in BT *Sanhedrin* 106b. The full verse in Psalms reads: *May the kindness of YHVH be upon us. The work of our hands, establish for us; the work of our hands, establish it*.

602. לא תרצח **(*Lo tirtsaḥ*), *You shall not murder*... interrupted by an accent...** In the public reading of the Ten Commandments, a pausal accent sign (*tippeḥa*) appears beneath the word לא (*lo*), *not*, in each of these three commandments. According to Rabbi Shim'on, this sign transforms the meaning. For example, without the pausal accent under the *lo* of *lo tirtsaḥ, you shall not murder*, it would be forbidden to ever kill anyone, even a convicted murderer, which would lead to social chaos. The *tippeḥa*, however, yields a new reading: [In general] *lo*, [you shall] *not* [murder]; [however, in certain situations] *tirtsaḥ, you shall kill*.

See *Minḥat Shai* on the beginning of the Ten Commandments in Exodus. On this type of disjunctive exegesis, see above, note 400.

603. לא תנאף **(*Lo tin'af*), *You shall not commit adultery*...** Here too, the pausal accent *tippeḥa* transforms the meaning: *Lo*, [you shall] *not* [commit adultery]; [however, within marriage] *tin'af, you shall copulate*.

On the *mitsvah* of satisfying one's wife sexually, see M *Ketubbot* 5:6; above, note 508. The nineteenth-century scholar Solomon Judah Leib Rapoport condemned this radical interpretation of *lo tin'af*, calling it blasphemous. See his *Iggerot Shir*, 5.

604. לא תגנב **(*Lo tignov*), *You shall not steal*...** The normal sense of this commandment, if taken to the extreme, would forbid even appropriating the wisdom of one's

teacher or feasting on his enlightened countenance. It would also prevent a judge from exposing a defendant's (or disputant's) lies by questioning him cunningly, since this would be considered גניבת דעת (*geneivat da'at*), "stealing the mind, deception." However, the pausal accent yields a new meaning: *Lo*, [you shall] *not* [steal]; [however, in certain situations] *tignov, you shall steal* [the mind—that is, appropriate a teacher's wisdom or deceive a deceiver].

On the insight gained from seeing a teacher, see BT *Eruvin* 13b. On *geneivat da'at*, "stealing the mind, deception," see 2 Samuel 15:6; *Mekhilta, Neziqin* 13; *Tosefta Bava Qamma* 7:8, 9, 13; Lieberman, *Tosefta ki-Fshutah*, 9:72–73. On stealing words of Torah, see *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 22:3; Lieberman, loc. cit. For another interpretation of "stealing the mind" of one's teacher, see Galante; *MmD*.

605. **לא תענה (*Lo ta'aneh*), *You shall not bear, false witness*...** Here the accent sign beneath the word לא (*lo*), *not*, is not pausal (or disjunctive), but rather conjunctive (*merkha*), since one should never *bear false witness*.

606. **In all words of Torah... supernal mysteries...** Just as a simple accent sign can transform the meaning of a verse, so innumerable mysteries pervade the words of Torah.

On this principle, see *Zohar* 1:54a, 135a, 145b, 163a, 187a, 201a; 2:12a, 59b, 65b, 98b–99b; 3:79b, 149a, 152a, 174b, 202a, 265a; *ZḤ* 6d (*MhN*). Cf. *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 336; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:47; BT *Menaḥot* 29b; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:50.

607. **So too, לא תתמד (*Lo taḥmod*), *You shall not covet*—not interrupted at all...** Here too, the accent sign beneath the word לא (*lo*), *not*, is not pausal (or disjunctive), but rather conjunctive (*merkha*). One might conclude, therefore, that it is absolutely forbidden to covet or desire—even to desire Torah. However, the formulation of this last of the Ten Commandments proves otherwise. All the other nine commandments are stated generally (for example, *You*

shall not steal), whereas here the Torah begins generally (*You shall not covet*) but then lists specific items that might be coveted: *your neighbor's house, his field, or his servant*. According to rabbinic hermeneutics, a general statement followed by a specific statement cannot include more than the specific statement. Thus, the command *You shall not covet* includes only material things (such as *house, field, servant*), not the eternal spiritual treasure of Torah, which should be desired.

The hermeneutical principle employed here is applied differently to this commandment in *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 8. On Torah providing longevity in this world and in the world that is coming, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 30:20; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 31; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 11; *Zohar* 2:86b.

The phrase *your neighbor's house, his field, or his servant*… appears in the second version of the Ten Commandments (in Deuteronomy). See above, note 540. In both versions this final command concludes:… *or anything that belongs to your neighbor*.

608. **These ten utterances of Torah are totality of commandments…** According to rabbinic tradition, the Ten Commandments ("ten utterances of Torah") include all 613 commandments of the Torah. See above, note 543.

Rabbi Shim'on adds that the Ten Commandments symbolize all of existence and correspond to the ten utterances of Creation. According to M *Avot* 5:1, "The world was created through ten utterances." (Only nine explicit commands appear in the opening chapter of Genesis, but the decade is completed by counting the phrase *In the beginning*.) In Kabbalah, these ten utterances of Creation symbolize the ten *sefirot*.

See BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 32a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 506; *Zohar* 1:15a, 16b, 30a; 2:34b, 67a, 75b, 156b; 3:11b–12a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 219–20 (and Wolfson's n. 20),

340–41; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 4–5 (6–7), 19 (23); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 371; above, note 544.

On the relation between "the ten utterances of Creation" and the Ten Commandments, see *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Deuteronomy 5:6; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 6:46; *Zohar* 3:11b–12a. On seeing "eye-to-eye," see above, p. 319, n. 425.

609. **maidservant at the Red Sea saw…** God's manifestation at the Red Sea was so spectacular that even the most lowly Israelite saw more than was seen much later by Ezekiel, who saw the divine chariot-throne whirling through the heavens. Perhaps, then, the theophany at the Red Sea resembled what happened at Mount Sinai. The difference, however, is that at Sinai, the Israelites were purged of the demonic contamination that had tainted humanity ever since Adam and Eve's sin. They became like angels, able to gaze directly into the Divine Glory. Each Israelite then received revelation according to his capacity.

On Israel's perception of God at the Red Sea, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1, 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1, 2; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:2; *Tosefta Sotah* 6:4; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 15:2; JT *Sotah* 5:4, 20c; BT *Berakhot* 50a, *Sotah* 11b, 30b–31a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:9; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), pp. 14–15; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:12; 23:8; *Midrash Tehillim* 8:5; 68:14; *Zohar* 2:55b, 60a, 64b.

On the demonic filth, see BT *Yevamot* 103b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זוהמא (*zohama*), filth [or: slime, lust]. Israel, who stood at Mount Sinai—their filth ceased. Star-worshipers, who did not stand at Mount Sinai—their filth did not cease."

See BT *Shabbat* 145b–146a, *Avodah Zarah* 22b; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 4:1 (variants); *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 21; *Zohar* 1:36b–37a, 52a–b, 54a, 122b, 126a–b,

145b, 228a; 2:193b; 3:14b, 97b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 139; above, note 561.

On the garments of the angels, see Naḥmanides on Genesis 18:1; *Zohar* 1:34a, 58a, 81a (*ST*), 98b (*ST*), 101a, 144a; 2:197a, 229b, 231a; 3:126b, 152a, 208a; *ZḤ* 81a (*MhN, Rut*).

The image of the embryo seeing (or praising) the Divine Glory from its mother's womb appears in the context of God's manifestation at the Red Sea in a number of the sources cited in the second paragraph of this note. Here, the point is that at Sinai the pregnant mothers' bodies became so translucent that their embryos could see the Divine Glory.

On the theme of each Israelite experiencing the revelation at Sinai according to his capacity, see above, note 304. The phrase "like the radiance of heaven" derives from Daniel 12:3.

610. **the world did not exist enduringly…** The existence of the world depends on Torah. Thus, until Israel received the Torah at Mount Sinai, the world was not firmly established, enduring only contingently.

See BT *Pesaḥim* 68b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Were it not for Torah [which is studied day and night], heaven and earth would not endure, as is said: *Were it not for My covenant day and night, I would not have established the laws of heaven and earth*."

See BT *Shabbat* 33a, *Nedarim* 32a, *Sanhedrin* 99b, *Avodah Zarah* 3a; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 18; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 16; *Tanḥuma, Noaḥ* 3, *Ha'azinu* 3; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21; *Shemot Rabbah* 47:4.

See BT *Shabbat* 88a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "The blessed Holy One stipulated a condition with the works of Creation, saying to them: 'If Israel accepts the Torah, you will endure. If not, I will return you to *chaos and void* (Genesis 1:2).'" See *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1.

On Torah as strength (based on the verse in Psalms), see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:2; 19:16; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 343; BT *Zevaḥim* 116a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4; 2:3; *Midrash Tehillim* 8:4; 21:2; *Zohar* 1:240a; 2:58a; 3:269a.

"Became fragrantly firm" renders אתבסם (*itbassam*), "became sweetened" or "was firmly established." The root בסם (*bsm*) conveys both senses. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 66:2; *Midrash Shemu'el* 26:4; *Zohar* 1:30b, 31a, 34a, 37a, 56a, 137a; 2:10a, 105a, 143a, 168a, 227a; 3:18a; Bronsnick, "Ha-Shoresh 'Bsm'"; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 165, 388, n. 44; idem, *Kabbalah*, 228.